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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

LAST SHOT Reynaldo Dagsa (inset) shot this photo of his daughter, wife and mother-in-law and, unwittingly, of his killer who was aiming a pistol at him on New Year's Eve in front of his house in Mayapa, Calasiao City

Tax case filed vs Garcia

Councilman had gun but didn't draw it, says wife

By Kristine Felizas Pangonay

DEADLY FLASH An anonymous close-up of the alleged gunman, Jarod Bumadlos, in this photo that Reynaldo Dagsa shows a child's flash from his 45 cal. pistol's barrel. This indicates that Dagsa pushed his camera just as the killer pulled the trigger of his gun. Bumadlos is still at large.

Ex-general owes gov't ₱15M, barely 5% of ₱303-M plunder raps

By Marlen Ramos

FORMER MILITARY comptroller Carlos Garcia is headed to another legal battle over his family's unexplained wealth.

The Department of Justice has recommended the filing of a tax evasion case against the retired major general and his wife Gloria for undeclared income of close to ₱28 million in 2002 and 2003.

But the amount is barely 9 percent of the ₱303 million that Garcia is accused of stashing from state coffers when he was the chief finance officer of the 130,000-strong Armed Forces.

In a review resolution dated Dec. 23, 2010, senior deputy state prosecutor Miguel Carlo Zi. approved the complaint for violation of the National Internal Revenue Code of 1997 filed in 2005 by the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) against the Garcia couple.

"[We've held that the documents presented by the BIR are admissible and have sufficiently

Public Attorney's Office in touch with Alfaro

By Cathy Yamsuan and Nikko Dizon

THE PUBLIC Attorney's Office (PAO) yesterday said it was in touch through "intermediaries" with Jessica Alfaro, the desired and the Supreme Court declared star witness in the Maguindanao massacre.

But PAO chief Persida Acosta admitted that government lawyers still needed to convince Alfaro to give a statement, especially after her disappointment with the Supreme Court decision last month to acquit Andrew Ampatuan Jr. and his stepmother Zaldy Ampatuan.

"We are in touch with her only through intermediaries. There is no direct contact with her," Acosta clarified. She did not say who's Alfaro's

Alfaro is known to have talked through phone calls and

German envoy seeks peaceful resolution to 'expropriation' case of Naia Terminal 3

By Cynthia D. Balana

GERMANY'S ambassador to the Philippines yesterday urged the Aquino administration to sit down with the German firm Fraport AG to settle to bring a peaceful resolution to the "expropriation case" of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) Terminal 3 dispute.

"As a way out of this impasse, I am still optimistic that the new administration, in line with its investment priorities, will bring the parties involved to the negotiating table in order to facilitate a legal, fair and timely solution for an inherited problem," Ambassador Clemens Ludwig Wilhelm Lortsch said.

Lortsch said that since his arrival in the Philippines in August 2007, he had committed to bring business and jobs to the Philippines.

"Unfortunately, the longer impediment to this day remains the unresolved expropriation case of the Naia 3 terminal not only for

Luistro decides to make a run for it

By Tarra Quismundo

SIX MONTHS on the job, Education Secretary Armin Luistro makes a run for it. For health, that is.

As his New Year's resolution, the head of

Death toll in floods, slides in South now 10

By Kristine L. Alave, Inquirer Mindanao and Inquirer Visayas

TIE RAINS caused yesterday in Mindanao, according to weathermen, but the flash floods and landslides those had spawned claimed the lives of at least 10 people and displaced some 260,000 people in provinces in the Caraga region, Compostela Valley and Davao del Norte.

A state of calamity has been declared in Surigao del Sur, Surigao del Sur and Butuan City in Agusan del Norte after landslides and floods swamped farmlands, destroyed bridges and roads, and toppled power lines, said Bienvenido Labongisco, director of the Office of the Civil Defense (OCD) in Caraga.

WATERWORLD Children on a makeshift raft float on a flooded road in Agusan del Sur Tuesday.

DOT bats for Metro's unseen treasures

FROM THE colorful street dancing festivals in honor of the Sto. Niño to the fishing celebration and art exhibits, the Department of Tourism (DOT) yesterday made a pitch for Metro Manila's "undiscovered treasures" to draw local and foreign tourists before summer.

"We have begun the redevelopment of Metro Manila as a tourist destination in itself through our collaboration with the local government units," Tourism Secretary Alberto Lim said in a statement sent to reporters yesterday.

"Soon, both foreigners and

Bishop's advice to Lacson, Singson

A CATHOLIC bishop has a simple solution for the twin problems stalling Congress—for him, Panfilo Lacson to confess and face the law and for Ilocos Sur bishop Ireneo Singson to resign if found by the Ombudsman guilty of misuse to have committed wrongdoing.

Lacson, who is wanted for his purported involvement in the 2003 murder of publicist Salvador Dacer and driver Emmanuel Corbito, should have trust in the government he is serving to give him justice, according to Catanduanes Auxiliary Bishop Jose Colin Bagaforo.

"He was [for senator] so it means he trusts the government ... He has to have the law because, after all, he is a senator of the law," Bagaforo yesterday

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered showers and thunderstorms, particularly due to the northeast monsoon, while the rest of Luzon will be mostly cloudy to cloudy with light rain.

Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cotabato	Mostly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly Cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Butuan	Mostly Cloudy

Second FRONTPAGE

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2-2-7

2 PM	4 23
5 PM	8 36
9 PM	11 31

QUARTRES

1 AM	4 6 2
5 PM	3 2 4
9 PM	4 5 2

SIX DIGIT (Tuesday draw)

7 3 2 9 4 2

6/45 LUZ-VIS-MIN

3 4 16 28 30 42

P3,674,143.00

SUPER LOTTO 6/49

10 11 18 20 22 26

P61,213,194.80

(LOTTO, "DAILY Tues-SAT LOTTO", send to MAIL PO Division)

19 soldiers seek amnesty

By Dona Z. Pazolagutan

FOUR officers and 15 enlisted personnel who were either demoted or dismissed for their involvement in attempts to bring down the Arroyo government have so far applied for amnesty.

Army Cpl. Fred Bunot was the first to personally file his amnesty application with the defense department's ad hoc amnesty committee at 9 a.m. yesterday.

The Department of National Defense on Monday officially started accepting applications for amnesty under President Aquino's Proclamation 75 offering amnesty to officers, enlisted men and civilians charged for involvement in three failed coups—the July 2003 mutiny at Oakwood, the February 2006 road call at the Marine headquarters in Fort Bonifacio and the November 2007 siege of the Manila Peninsula.

Bunot, who belonged to the Army's Light Reaction Company in the Southern Luzon Command (Solcom), said he was demoted as a result of his involvement in the Oakwood mutiny that was led by a group of junior officers calling themselves the Magdalo, a rebel group that included now-Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV.

Cpl. Rodolfo Bayoday of the Army's 16th Scout Ranger Regiment, who also filed his application yesterday, said he was also demoted for involvement in the Oakwood mutiny.

Four others who also filed their applications—Marine Lt. Filmore Bell, Navy Ensign Ronald Dino, Navy Ensign Adjohn Vlandre and Marine Staff Sgt. Francisco Beal Jr.

According to Bunot, the four were all dismissed from the service for involvement in the Peninsula siege led by Trillanes and former Scout Ranger commander Lim Eduardo Jr.

At the end of office hours yesterday, the amnesty committee had received a total of 19 applications from 15 enlisted personnel and four officers.

Defense Undersecretary Honorio Azcueta, who chairs the five-man ad hoc amnesty committee, personally received the applications. He said the committee would process the applications and make a recommendation to DND officials within 15 days.

But if the committee receives an opposition to any of the applications during the next 10 days, Azcueta said they will have to look into the grounds for it.

He said the grounds for denial of application are refusal to admit guilt on the part of the applicant and failure to prove one's participation in the uprisings.

Peninsula siege, he had been demoted as a result of his involvement in the Oakwood mutiny.

"I want my name to be cleared then I will file for official retirement," said the former Marine who has served the military for nearly 20 years.

Bunot, he said, has no problem complying with the DND's requirement that he has to admit that his participation in the uprisings violated the Constitution and the country's laws as well as military's laws, and that he has to give a statement of his participation.

"Wika (said) ko sir (sir) nakasalang (I did not do anything bad. I have many honors but tied from that experience but I do not regret anything," he said.

Bunot said he was confident that all enlisted personnel will avail of the amnesty.

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But Sen. Trillanes won't admit guilt

By Christian V. Esguerra

SEN. ANTONIO Trillanes IV will formally apply for amnesty this week, but has ruled out admitting guilt for his participation in the three failed military uprisings against the government of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

At most, the senator will acknowledge only that in "joining" the Oakwood mutiny of 2003, "somehow he may have violated some procedures in the military and, maybe, even some laws," said the lawyer Rey Bellaa.

"He would be man enough to admit that," the lawyer said. "Unfortunately, he will apply for amnesty within the next few days," he said.

Bellaa insisted that President Aquino's amnesty Proclamation 75 did not include a provision requiring that the coup plotters admit guilt.

He said an admission of guilt, which might be included in the application form, would be merely procedural and would not keep qualified applicants from benefiting from the amnesty proclamation.

"So far as we are concerned, former Trillanes is willing to comply with the requirements imposed in the proclamation, which requires no admission of guilt," he said.

Bellaa said there was a difference between an applicant admitting that he might have violated certain rules of the military, and that he was guilty of trying to overthrow the government.

Mr. Aquino has been criticized for jumping the gun on the course, issuing the Proclamation Mr. Aquino refused and convened to Proclamation 75, even before the Makati judge trying Trillanes on the coup d'etat charges could hand down his decision.

Judge Oscar Pimentel has twice deferred the promulgation of his ruling after Mr. Aquino issued the amnesty proclamation.

He said the Trillanes' camp is hoping he would not have to return to jail with a formal application for amnesty.

Trillanes is out on provisional liberty pending the effectivity of the amnesty.

Aquino, Trillanes among Senate big spenders

By Christian V. Esguerra

PRESIDENT BENIGNO aquino has the smallest team but President Aquino handily outclassed a dozen rivals in the Senate.

Mr. Aquino joined the high-rolling ranks of Senators Gregorio Honasan, Gregorio Pimentel and Antonio Trillanes IV as the biggest spenders in the upper chamber in 2009, according to Sen. Jinkee Arroyo, based on a Commission on Audit (CoA) report.

The would-be president ranked third in spending among the 23 senators, using up a total of P22.6 million in 2009. The amount was a "shade higher" than that spent by the detained Trillanes, who was fourth with P21.1 million, in two months.

Each also with the top spenders with P21.6 million, closely followed by Honasan with P21.6 million, according to the CoA report.

Completing the top five big spenders was Sen. Ramon Bong Revilla Jr. with P21 million.

"There are the high rollers," said Arroyo, who maintained her standing as the "most frugal" senator with a P14.6-mil- lion expenditure in 2009.

"It turns out the showbiz and showbiz-related people are the biggest spenders. So no wonder. And (Juliet) Pimentel, he said.

Pimentel was unavailable for the statement spent by Trillanes, who was in jail for the entire period on coup charges for leading the July 2003 failed coup, otherwise known as the Oakwood mutiny.

"How can a person in prison spend that much money?" he asked in a phone interview, noting that the amount translates to at least P57,000 in daily expenses for the detained coup plotter.

"I travel on economy regularly but I didn't spend that much," he said.

Trillanes' lawyer Jun Robles defended his client by saying he kept within the P20 million annual budget ceiling for each senator.

AQUINO

TRILLANES

"We feel the issue is being resolved. There will be a push, but still if you exceeded your budget, but we did not. He (Trillanes) is that the budget is there to be spent to serve the people the best way possible and that's what he did," Robles said.

He said Trillanes was a productive despite being in jail, claiming to have filed 347 bills and resolutions—49 of which were passed into law—during the 14th Congress.

He said Trillanes was the principal author of the Philippine Benchmark bill, and co-author of the Cheaper Medicines Law.

"Senator Trillanes has performed his duties even while in detention. In contrast, what will he (senator Arroyo) do?" the lawyer said.

Robles said much of Trillanes' 2009 expenditure went to the salaries of his 44 staffers. He said the senator regularly hired fresh graduates to "expose them early on how working in government should be."

He said Arroyo underestimated by spent less because he had a staff of only three people.

"If you think about it, the powers saved more, per capita, with Senator Trillanes' than with Senator Arroyo, whose three staffers theoretically get some P3 to 4 million in 2009," the lawyer said.

Robles said the P264,000 travel allowance for Trillanes was used for the daily commutes of his staffers from his office at the Senate building to his detention cell at the Philippine National Police Headquarters in Camp Crame.

He said Trillanes also had a regular "consultation programs" in which his staff was sent to your communities around the country. Each visit involved the distribution of food packs in places like the Visayas to compared to Tondo, Manila.

The rest of the senators spend the following amounts in 2009: Francis Pangilinan (P28.7 million); Pia Cayetano (P18.8 million); Rodolfo Biazon (P20.4 million); Miriam Defensor-Santiago (P18.7) million); Panfilo Lacson (P15.7 million); Juan Ponce Enrile (P18.4 million); Jinkee Ejercito (P18.3 million); Manuel Villar (P18.34 million); Richard Gordon (P18.32 million); Jamby Madrigal (P16.2 million); Manuel Roxas II (P17.6 million); Panfilo Lacson (P7.75 million); Edgardo Angara (P17.2 million); Eduardo Angara (P16.4 million); and Aquilino Pimentel Jr. (P15.1 million).

Palace extends suspension of GOCC perks

MALACAÑANG HAS extended for another month the suspension of allowances, bonuses, incentives and other perks of directors of government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government-financed institutions (GFIs).

Executive Order No. 10, signed on Dec. 10 by President Aquino and Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa Jr., extended the suspension until Jan. 31 pending the issuance of policies and guidelines on the granting of such benefits to board members, officers and employees of these agencies.

Mr. Aquino issued EO 7 last year suspending such benefits following the public uproar over the GOCCs and GFIs granting their board members, officers and employees exorbitant bonuses and other perks.

The President created a Task Force on Corporate Compensation (TFCC) to review the grant of such benefits and devise new policies and guidelines.

EO 10 stated that the TFCC is still in the process of conducting a review of all compensation granted to officials and employees, as well as discretionary funds of the government firms.

"Considering the complexity of issues and a number of GOCCs and GFIs, there is a need to further review the grant of all remunerations and discretionary funds of the board members," the EO said. Gerelson Bordadora

Palace: Gov't to continue operating Naia 3

By Christine O. Avendaño

EXECUTIVE Secretary Paquito Ochoa yesterday said a decision by a UK-based arbitration body put Indra to square one the case filed by Fraport AG Frankfurt Worldwide Services against the government.

But Ochoa said it would not affect an earlier decision that denied the demand of the German firm for compensation from the Philippine government for building the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) Terminal 3.

Ochoa said the government would continue to operate Naia 3 despite the decision made by an ad hoc committee of the Washington-based International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).

"That decision has no effect in the operation of Naia 3," Ochoa said reporters after attending with President Aquino the turnover rites for the new Navy chief at the Navy headquarters in Manila.

Explaining the ICSID ruling, Ochoa said the arbitration body merely said Fraport should be given the chance to appear its evidence in its claim for compensation from the government because not all the procedures were done before.

"So the net effect in that decision is that we are back to square one. Back in zero," the executive secretary said.

Ochoa said that before this ruling, the ICSID ruled in 2007 that the Philippine government had no obligation to pay Fraport, which he described as the creditor of the Philippine Terminals Corp. (Piatco) consortium.

Piatco was the one the government contracted to build the terminal, he said.

Asked what would happen next, Ochoa said the government would continue to settle the issue on just compensation for the construction of Naia 3.

In a statement, Solicitor General Anselmo Cadiz said the decision by the ICSID ad hoc committee had "no impact on the merits of claim for compensation" by Fraport.

"Earlier the decision merely provides Fraport the opportunity to commence a new arbitration and to present its claims again. Likewise, the Philippine government is entitled to present the evidence against Fraport again," he said.

"With the annulment decision, the parties are brought to the situation prior to the filing of Fraport's request for arbitration," Cadiz said.

The Aquino administration will ask Fraport to submit documents for the construction of the terminal if the German firm decides to file a new case against the government, he said.

"Should Fraport choose to refile its treaty claims, the [government], therefore, will call upon Fraport to disclose the evidence of its expenditures on Naia 3.1," Cadiz said in a statement.

The government may also ask Fraport and the German government to present all evidence "relating to the project [documents] issued by German prosecutors against Fraport and from the officers and leaders of its officials and former officials," Cadiz said.

Cadiz said the government was likewise entitled to present the evidence against Fraport again.

GROUNDED Started in the late 1990s, the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 still mired in legal troubles after all these years has not quite taken off.

German envoy seeks peaceful resolution to 'expropriation' case

From page A1

German law also for European and other international investments," the ambassador said.

"The German government, through its partial investment guarantee, suffered the biggest loss of its kind in the last years," he added.

"It is time to look forward and do away with the ghosts of the past," he said, referring to the Fraport Aquino-Arroyo interlude and the problem-beset the previous administration.

Lutsch was reacting to the Dec. 23, 2010, decision of the International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) in Washington reiterating the right of Fraport to file an arbitration case/complaint case against the Philippine government.

The ICSID said Fraport was not given a chance to review a Department of Justice (DOJ) decision on the entitlement case filed against the German firm. The decision was issued after three years of consideration of the case.

Final and executory

The ICSID is another body set up by the World Bank to facilitate the settlement of investment disputes among member states.

The ICSID decision is final and executory and should pave the way for the full operation and grant of legal right by the government to airport terminal concessionaires.

Fraport, the principal investor in the consortium that built it, went to the World Bank ICSID to recover the P415 million it had invested in the project after the Philippine government seized the terminal in December 2004.

'INHERITED PROBLEM' says Christian Ludwig Weiler-Lutsch, German ambassador to the Philippines.

The seizure came after the Supreme Court voided the contract awarded to the Philippine International Air Terminals Corp. (Piatco) to build and operate the terminal.

Fraport also claimed protection for its investments under a bilateral investment treaty between Germany and the Philippines.

Three foreign airlines are currently building their businesses in the international wing of Naia 3.

Final judgment

To this day, no final judgment has been passed on the controversial.

Fraport's contract to the grounds that certain provisions were illegally exempted and by ousted President Joseph Estrada in 1998 in the final barrage of the government.

But the Supreme Court nullified the Piatco contract in 2003.

Expropriation case

On Dec. 23, 2004, the Office of the Solicitor General filed in the Pasay City Regional Trial Court a case to expropriate Naia 3 in an effort to have it working at the soonest time possible. The Pasay court issued a writ of possession to the government, but ordered it to pay Piatco P3.1 billion (P33.37 million) down payment as compensation.

Fraport accused the government of breaking the law when it took over the terminal. It dismissed the government's offered down payment as insufficient.

Fraport brought its case for compensation to the World Bank while Piatco sought a separate arbitration with the Singapore-based International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) arbitration tribunal.

On Aug. 23, 2006, the ICC ordered the government to return the facility to Piatco until a valid writ of possession was issued by a Philippine court. It said the writ released by the Pasay court in 2004 could only be considered valid if there was proof that the P3 billion down payment had been paid.

Piatco paid P3B

The next month, Piatco received the P3 billion from the government, paving the way for the Manila International Airport Authority to continue work on the facility for its opening.

On Aug. 17, 2007, the World Bank's International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) decided it lacked the jurisdiction to hear Fraport's claim and dismissed the company's claim for compensation over the terminal.

On July 23, 2008, Naia 3 finally started partial operations and accepted its first passengers, Inquirer Research.

Sources: Inquirer Archives, Inquirer Research division

WHAT WENT BEFORE

THE NINOY Aquino International Airport (Naia) Terminal 3 was approved for construction in 1997 and was originally scheduled to open in late 2002.

In keeping with the 1995 Naia master plan study, Terminal 3 was to replace the existing International Passenger Terminal 1, when operational, it should accommodate all international airlines.

German firm Hochtief Frankfurt Main AG (Fraport) is the principal investor in the Philippine International Air Terminals Corp. (Piatco) consortium that was tasked to build Naia 3.

In 2002, however, the Arroyo administration scuttled Piatco's contract with the grounds that certain provisions were illegally exempted and by ousted President Joseph Estrada in 1998 in the final barrage of the government.

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Death toll in floods, slides in South now 10

From page A1

In Southern Leyte, Governor Mercedes ordered the evacuation of people living in disaster-prone areas after nearby rains sent mud cascading down houses from a mountain in St. Bernard town, killing three children. Two drowning victims were reported.

A day after the holiday break, classes were suspended in more than a hundred elementary and high schools in Antique del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Agusan del Norte, Surigao del Sur and Bukidnon were told to evacuate centers for displaced families.

St. Bernard again

President Aquino has ordered authorities to address the needs of the flood victims in the Visayas and Mindanao and find out why these were still casualties in St. Bernard despite the relocation of villagers there.

"Not too, the major issue is St. Bernard in Southern Leyte because most of the people had been relocated there and yet their lives are still endangered," the President told reporters after attending the command turnover and confidence rites at the Philippine Navy headquarters in Manila.

Cold air from northeast Asia coming into contact with warmer air in the tropical country have helped cause the heavy rains. Yesterday, the Philippine atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) reported improved weather in Mindanao based on satellite images.

"This clouds proved. Southern Palawan and Rio Tuba have rain now. Satellite readings show downward rain in Caraga," Aristotelo Tarnate Jr., acting Pagasa chief said in an interview.

But Tarnat said the rain band brought by the tail-end of the "cold front" would bring rain to the Visayas in the next two days. He said front occurs when a mass of cool air replaces a mass of warm air, forming clouds that bring precipitation.

Worst flood in 18 yrs

"The rain band is moving upward. In 48 hours, it will be rainy in Visayas," Tarnat said.

Eastern Visayas is expected to have "moderate to occasionally heavy rains" in the next 24 hours, according to a report from the Office of Civil Defense regional department. Central and Western Visayas will experience "light to moderate rains."

Abner Capa, director of the state-owned Philippine Information Agency in Caraga, said eight people were killed while six others remained missing in the region. The two other fatalities were reported in Mondays town in Compostela Valley and in Barey town in Lanao del Norte.

Three of the Caraga fatalities were recorded in Butuan, two in Surigao del Sur, two in Agusan del Sur and one in Surigao City.

"This is the worst flooding in 18 years. Butuan City usually does not get flooded because it is protected by a viaduct but this time, it really got hit. The whole of Butuan City is flooded," Undersecretary told Agence France-Presse.

"Even the areas previously not touched by floods were affected," the said of the city of 277,000 people.

But Butuan Mayor Ferdinand Amante said floodwaters inundated nearly half of 42 of the city's 86 barangays. A total of 21,875 people or 4,375 families, mostly living in low-lying areas and near the Agusan River, were displaced, he said.

More rumrel collapse

Caga said a state turned rumrel in at Barangay Malitas in Butuan on Monday, killing Eleonora Alburo Jr., 17, and Cheyzer Arbito, 8y.

A 61-year-old woman was killed while another was missing in two landslides that hit the gold-rich Mt. Diwalwal in Monkayo on Sunday night, according to Compostela Valley Gov. Arturo Uy.

Floodwaters forced at least 38 families to leave their homes in Monkayo's town. Boats and tire fitfth in New Bataan town were mobilized, Mayor Lorenzo Ballesteros said.

Senior Supt. Aaron Aquino, provincial police chief, said two children were swept away by strong river currents here on Monday. Recovery, however, failed to recover their bodies.

In Lanao del Norte, 1,287 families or 6,400 people in Lala, Sultan and Bacol town have fled their homes due to floods. A 6-year-old girl drowned as raging floodwaters swept her family's home in Barangay Kapatan in Barey.

Engulfed by floods were Barangays Saw on, Pendalan, Bitanggay Barey, Lanipao, Cabasagan in Lala, Upper Bagadat, Raw-an Point, and Barey Dam in Bacol and Pigcarangan, Poblacion, Buhol and Canal Sumbalan in Buhol.

Relief and rehabilitation efforts continued yesterday. Recovery began in outside particularly in low-lying and riverside villages. Power supply has yet to be restored in several towns in Lanao del Sur.

In Tapon City, hundreds of Lyon Governor Mercado ordered the provincial disaster management office to evacuate residents in disaster-prone areas.

Five children, three from St. Bernard, one from Tomas Oppus town and another from Sogod town, were killed on Sunday at the height of incessant rains in the province.

The fatalities included 5-year-old Maria Patricia Dizquyed and her year-old brother Rodel, 7-year-old Jordan Labigan, 11-year-old Rina Bello Montevirgenia and 11-year-old Patrick Pelana.

The father of Dizquyed, her brother and Labigan were found buried in mud near their home in Barangay Bidad-Bidad, St. Bernard. A portion of the nearby mountain crashed into the houses of the Dizquyed and Labigan families, who are neighbors.

Elizabelle Montevirgenia, 10, and Patrick Pelana, 11, drowned while running a flooded rice field in Barangay Bitanggay in Tomas Oppus town and a river in Barangay Pancho-Villa in Sogod town, respectively.

Lessons from Guinsaugon

"This was the result of the people's disobedience," Mercado told the reporters on Monday when asked why there were casualties though early warning systems had been installed in certain areas and lessons were learned from the Guinsaugon landslide tragedy in 2006.

The President said his officials had been monitoring the situation in the affected areas. "The Number One priority is that the needs of people there are addressed," he said.

He directed Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin, who is the concurrent chief of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, to coordinate with the chief of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, to "find out exactly why there were two people who died in the same place that in 2006 resulted in over a thousand casualties."

"So we will review this. I'm also going to task the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Public Works and Highways, among others, why a relocation had been done in St. Bernard and there were still deaths," Malacañang said.

Peak of La Niña

Weisel said the abnormally heavy showers that northeastern Mindanao fell could be attributed to the emergence of the La Niña phenomenon, which the Philippines will experience until May. Pagasa has warned that the peak of La Niña in the country will be felt during the months of January and February.

La Niña refers to the abnormal cooling of ocean surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific. In the Philippines, the La Niña means below-normal to below-rainfall conditions, Pagasa said.

With reports from Philippine Information Agency in Caraga, Inquirer Mindanao, Jaci Arnaiz, Inquirer Visayas; Christine O. Avendaño and Reva Quimomido/ AFP

BPOs to hire 84,000 more workers in 2011

By Philip C. Tubeza

AT LEAST 84,000 jobs will be up for grabs in the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry in the country this year, the Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE) said yesterday.

DOLE spokesperson Sioni Tanseveng said BPO leaders told the labor department that they would need an estimated 84,000 new employees in 2011 as the industry continues to grow by leaps and bounds.

The BPO industry includes call centers, legal and medical transcription, accounting services, software development and animation, among others services for overseas principals.

To help fill up the projected vacancies, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) will offer a free six-month training course for prospective BPO workers.

Graduates of the course will all be absorbed by BPO companies, Tanseveng said.

P20M for training

"(Tesda) has already allotted P20 million for the training of workers. That training is going to be free. And there is an assurance from the BPO sector that they will absorb the graduates," he added.

Tanseveng said interested applicants can visit Tesda or its regional offices if they want to attend the course.

"They should at least have the basic English speaking skills, while those who want to go in to medical transcription should have background in medical matters," Tanseveng said.

"Maybe one nurses who are out of work (OOW) do this. We have an estimated 130,000 nurses who are unemployed," he added.

The DoLE earlier estimated that the country would produce at least one million new jobs annually until 2016, the end of the term of office of President Aquino.

The estimates are based on the projection of the National Economic Development Authority that the economy would grow by six to seven percent annually," Tanseveng said.

"If we maintain that economic growth rate, the DoLE estimates that we would have 1.1/1.2 million new jobs every year," he added.

For 2010, the Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics (BLES) monitored 1,811,168 new jobs as of October, or a 2.8 percent year-on-year increase.

"Total employed persons increased to 36.469 million from 35.478 million a year ago indicating a net addition or new employment generation of 1.011 million," BLES said.

OFWs warned of scams in KL

THE PHILIPPINE embassy in Kuala Lumpur has warned against various financial scams targeting mainly female overseas Filipino workers.

In a report to the Department of Foreign Affairs, the embassy in the Malaysian capital said an undisclosed number of OFWs had fallen prey to the swindlers.

"The swindlers often target Filipino women with well-paying jobs in reputable companies" in Malaysia, said the statement.

The victims were "deceived into parting with their hard-earned money by people whose story apparently cut through the barriers."

According to the embassy, the swindlers, using "bogus documents and bogus names of Malaysian officials," make their victims believe that:

- There is a valuable package or bundles of foreign currency issue under the victim's name which cannot be claimed immediately;
- There is a lucrative job awaiting the victim; or
- The victim needs to bail out a friend who is in big trouble and is detained by Malaysian authorities.

"The swindler tells the victim to remit money as a precondition for receipt of the goods or job contracts, or assistance to getting his or her friend out of jail," said the embassy.

Jerry E. Esplanada

2 justices, poll lawyer eyed for Comelec–Melo

By Jeremiah Antaig

COMMISSION on Elections (Comelec) Chair Jose Melo (retired) said a retired Supreme Court justice and an incumbent one, as well as a well-known election lawyer, were among those being considered by Malacañang to succeed him when he retires in June. The election lawyer was Atty. Brillantes D. Ballentes Jr., he said.

Melo identified the retired justice as Leonardo Quisumbing, who left the bench in November 2009, while the incumbent justice was Antonio Eduardo Nachura, who is set to retire in May.

The election lawyer was Atty. Brillantes D. Ballentes Jr., he said.

"These three I mentioned are all qualified. They are skilled people. They understand elections. They are all upright and honest. Anyone of them will do the Comelec justice. They can run the agency well," Melo told reporters on the sidelines of a conference on campaign expenditures.

Quisumbing is also a former labor secretary and is the lawyer of Former Commission on Human Rights Chair Purificacion Quisumbing. He was one of the justices who backed former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's invocation of executive privilege during the Senate investigation of the $800-ZTE deal in 2007.

The fellowship cum honorific Quisumbing "aided" with the court majority in striking down a Malacañang-backed people's initiative to amend the Constitution.

Nachura is a former house representative and solicitor general, while Brillantes is Presidential Appointments Secretary Ricardo Saludo's election lawyer. His brother, Jose Brillantes, is a foreign undersecretary in the present administration.

Melo, himself a retired Supreme Court justice, is stepping down as Comelec chair on Jan. 31. The seat then will serve the remainder of Melo's term-on-leave, which will end in 2015.

Two other Comelec commissioners, Gregorio Larrazabal and Nicodemo Ferrer, are set to retire in February, leaving the seven-member body with three vacancies.

Asked when the Presidential would announce his successor, Melo said this could be when Congress resumes its session.

"What I heard is the President will announce the name by January but I don't assume that will happen. I think the chair will be in the office (Congress) goes into session, because right now the Congress is not in session and there is no vacancy yet because I'm still here. When it's vacated on Jan. 31, Congress will already be in session," he said.

Congressmen and senators make up the Commission on Appointments which approves presidential appointees to the Comelec and Supreme Court.

Commissioner Rene Sarmenta to visit reporters earlier he had heard the names of Comelec law department director Ferdinand Rellanes, Management Association of the Philippines (now) Solicitor Rodolfo Pescado, Philippine Council for Responsible Voting (now) consultant Howard Calleja, IT expert and lawyer Al Mangaoil III, Evelyn Singson of Namfrel, and Ballantes associate Jonathan Avella being touched about as possible successors to Commissioner Ferrer.

Hopes raised for Abadilla 5

By Nikko Dizon

IS THERE still hope for the Abadilla 5?

Supreme Court spokesperson Jose Midas Marquez said yesterday a finding by the Ombudsman that the five men convicted for the murder of former Col. Rolando Abadilla were tortured into admitting to the crime could be considered in their motions for the Supreme Court to reconsider their final conviction.

"That can be considered in the resolution of the MR (motion for reconsideration)," Marquez told the Inquirer in a text message.

However, should the high tribunal decide on the motion before the Ombudsman reaches its findings on the allegations of torture, Marquez said the findings could be of no use anymore.

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima and other lawyers interviewed by the Inquirer think it would be a big shot for the Abadilla 5 to use findings that they were tortured by policemen in asking the Supreme Court to reconsider its April 2010 decision that already upheld their conviction in the 1995 murder.

De Lima said a conditional pardon could be the next best thing for the Abadilla 5, one of whom is suffering from kidney failure and needs constant medical attention.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

JANUARY 5 (Wednesday)
Psalter: Week 2
St. John Neumann (Philosophy after Epiphany)
Epiphany
Is 72:1-2, 10, 12-13
Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.

1st Reading: 1 Jn 4:11-18

Dear friends, if such has been the love of God, we, too, must love one another.

No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love within us is perfected in us.

How final we know that we live in God and he in us? Because God has given us his Spirit.

We ourselves have seen and declare that the Father sent his Son to save the world. Those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains within and they in God.

We have known the love of God and have believed this. God is love. The one who lives in love, lives in God and God in him.

Here in we know that our love reached a perfect level. What in this world, we are like him in everything and expect will soon desire the Day of Judgment.

There is no fear in love. Perfect love drives away fear, for fear has to do with punishment; those who fear do not know perfect love.

Gospel: Mk 6:45-52

After the five thousand men were satiated, Jesus obliged his disciples to get into the boat and go ahead of him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he himself sent the crowd away. And having sent the people off, he went to himself to the hillside to pray.

When evening came, the boat was far out on the lake while he was alone on the land. He saw they were straining at the oars, for the wind was against them, and before daybreak he came to them walking on the lake; and he was passing by near them.

When they saw him walking on the lake, they thought it was a ghost and cried out, for they all saw him and were terrified. But at once he talked to them, "Courage! It's me, don't be afraid." Then they got into the boat with him and the wind died down. They were completely astonished, for they had not really grasped the fact of the loaves; their minds were dull.

Reflection

Jesus demonstrated what the author of First John said, "perfect love drives away fear." Jesus called out to the disciples in Saint George. The is the third showing as the power of the presence. He is the one who, the symbolic of the sea. Architectural [illegible] used to its further because we have reached perfect love – the power of those who receive us. "Come, don't be afraid."

Christian Communications Foundation, Inc., 4 Mercer St. off Hilary Ballroom, Quezon City, (2) 441-4 Mabini cum Quezon City, M. for Mercy, Pedro Bay Inc. (02) 921-4000 and exhibition and [illegible] http://www.dailygospel.org [illegible] http://dailygospel.org/ [illegible]

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Tax evasion case filed against Garcia, wife

From page A1

established that probable cause exists to indict respondents spouses for the crime of tax evasion," the 15-page resolution read in part.

Garcia, who is charged with plunder, has entered into a plea bargain with the Office of the Ombudsman that will allow her to walk free in exchange for pleading guilty to the loose offenses of bribery and money laundering and turning over to the government more than P100 million in assets.

He is not cut loose.

The prosecutor's plea bargain, which has yet to be approved by the Sandiganbayan, has elicited outrage from various sectors, including Malacañang. President Aquino appears set to undo the plea bargain tool is not pre-empting them.

Tax deficiencies

In its complaint, the BIR said the Garcias owed the government P7,651,541.53 in tax deficiencies in 2002 and P8,667,814.30 in 2003.

Prosecutor General Claro Arellano ordered Gatbo to review the case that Iloilo Prosecutor Edmundo Hagsumbay had dismissed.

A group of overseas officers led by supervisor Alexander Martinez lashed into the bank accounts and other financial transactions of the Garcias after they were charged with plunder in the Sandiganbayan.

According to the BIR, Garcia zoned in his income tax return in 2003 that he received P901,700.97 in salaries, wages and allowances as a military general and director of the AFP Savings and Loan Association Inc. (AFPSLAI).

In his 2003 Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Net Worth (SALN), he declared total earnings of P1,123,000.

Hiding actual income

But records obtained by the BIR from the Office of the Ombudsman said the Securities and Exchange Commission found a number of questionable financial transactions of the Garcia family.

For instance, Clarita received $40,000 in cash when she traveled to the United States in May 2003, as attested by the Currency and Monetary Instruments Report dated May 13, 2003, by the US Customs Service.

She also bought shares amounting to P320,000 in two companies — LTI Strings Orchestra Inc. and LTI Rehabilitation Corp. — in the same year.

Clarita maintained two foreign currency accounts with Allied Banking Corp. containing $305,000; her husband made a deposit of P4,052,703.35 to his AFPSLAI account; Clarita deposited P1,038,345.78 to her own accounts.

GARCIA: BI gotcha wealth is not subject to taxes.

No visible source of income

In a visit to the United States on Dec. 17, 2003, Clarita brought with her $100,000 in cash. Two days later, their son Paolo was held in a San Francisco airport for failing to declare $100,000 in cash in his possession.

Previous foreign con**plainant BIR** revealed that respondent spouses attempted to hide their actual or true income," Gatbo said in his resolution.

As a legally married couple, the Garcias should have declared their aggregate income "even if one of their has no visible source of income, as in the case of Clarita," Gatbo said.

"Simply, the manner by which respondent spouses went about their business and the way through the filing of false and fraudulent income tax returns," he said.

Ill-gotten wealth not taxable

In their defense, the Garcias said the complaint should be dismissed outright as "a scrap of paper" for the BIR's failure to include a certification of non-forum shopping.

The couple said the evidence against them was inadmissible because the BIR had obtained only photocopies of the documents — from the records of the Ombudsman and Sandiganbayan which formed part of the plunder case.

They argued that the documents were "illegally secured" because these indicted people are the Ombudsman.

The Garcias also said the tax evasion case should be "subsumed" in the plunder case, and that ill-gotten wealth was not subjected to taxes.

But Gatbo threw out the couple's arguments, saying the documents are admissible because they could easily be duplicated in the Ombudsman's records.

He said that while the documents were just reproductions of the originals, these were acquired from the Sandiganbayan which had been given the plunder case.

"Preliminary investigations should, as much as possible, be decided on the merits and not on technicality," he said, adding that the documents were "the best obtainable evidence."

He also found no illegality in the tax assessments made by the tax examiners are presumed correct and made in good faith. The taxpayer has the duty to prove otherwise," Gatbo said.

Shroud of secrecy

Speaking with reporters, Justice Secretary Leila de Lima said the rejected initiative of a number of Garcia assets to the government was "hasty."

De Lima pointed out that the imposition that were the subject of the complaint were pending in the Sandiganbayan.

"The case I filed bars. What's the basis of the issuance if the case is not yet in the appreciation?" she said. "That's the problem if I think like that are covered by a shroud of secrecy."

De Lima said the plea bargain between Garcia and the Ombudsman was a big blow to the government's campaign to put the "big fish" of corruption.

"What's the point of the deal? Is the amount involved enough to sacrifice the very principles involved...accountability and transparency?" De Lima said.

"You know how hard it is to put a big fish. Now that we have one, they let him go. In the amount, 19.88 plus million, enough compared to the losses that we should reach?" she said.

Malacañang's move

At the Palace, Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa indicated that Malacañang was still keen on looking to case against the plea bargain.

"We're still conducting our own study with the help of the ombudsman in reviewing into the plea bargain and the supposed impending promulgation of it by the Sandiganbayan," Ochoa told reporters.

He said the government "will double [its] moves" when the anti-graft court sets the date of the promulgation of the forfeiture case.

Malacañang had earlier said that members of the military had every right to insist that Garcia be tried for plunder.

AFP injured party

The President's spokesperson Edwin Lacierda had said in an earlier briefing that it was the military's resources that were affected by Garcia's alleged acts of corruption.

"The AFP believes it is the injured party in the case since it was from funds that were touched by General Garcia," Lacierda said in a text message.

Ybanez, like everyone else who followed Davis in a strong one. He AFP would also like to see the case go through," he added. *With a report from Norman Bordadora*

Bishop's advice to Lacson—surface, to Singson—resign

From page A1

and over Church run Radio Veritas.

As for Singson, who is facing drug trafficking charges in Hong Kong, Bagabuyo said: "If he committed no offense, then his conscience is okay and the law will also realize a judgment in his innocence."

Bagabuyo admitted that he knew little of the legalities in the House of Representatives. But if in other committee powers that Singson committed misconduct, "the most honorable thing for him to do is resign," the bishop said.

Singson was arrested in July 2010 on the Hong Kong international airport after being found in possession of 26 grams of cocaine and two tablets of Ecstasy, which is reported marketed as Subutex.

He was eventually allowed to post bail but is prohibited from leaving the Chinese territory.

Lacson has been in large since January 2010 despite government efforts to find him here and abroad.

Bagabuyo said Lacson and Singson should see a good example for the citizenry.

"That's what's happening," the bishop pointed out. "It only shows that there is something lacking in their service, and that their [avowed] intention to serve the country is not sincere."

PE echoes colleagues

A member of Singson's colleagues in the House have demanded his expulsion from the chamber for his father, Rocco Ilac Ilac Lim "Cherif" Singson, convicted that Congress should first make an example of Lacson.

Saturday, Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile told reporters in a phone patch interview that only the chamber could discipline Lacson but that it had no basis and was in no rush to do so.

"He's a senator," Enrile said. "It's only the Senate that can exercise disciplinary action over him."

In the same manner, Singson can only be disciplined by the House, Enrile said, adding:

"And if they ask for his removal, that's a problem of ethics. That he's taking drugs and he's a member of the House of Representatives, that must be brought dishonor to the chamber[s]."

Besides, there's no point of comparison in the cases of the two lawmakers, Enrile said, refusing his colleagues.

Enrile pointed out that "the act of Lacson for which he is charged happened when he was not yet a senator," and that "even if he was a member of the Senate only, the courts can decide whether he's guilty or not guilty."

In Singson's case, "his act happened when he was a member of [the House]," Enrile said.

"While there's no warrant for his arrest [here], he's under arrest in Hong Kong. In fact, according to the papers, he's about to plead guilty to the charge levelled at him by the Hong Kong authorities..." Enrile said.

Talk among lawmakers about Singson's expulsion surfaced after Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr. said representatives seeking Singson's expulsion should go through due process of getting the majority vote, or 100 votes of 285.

Belmonte told reporters that Singson was guaranteed "due process" under the Constitution even if the Hong Kong court found him guilty of drug trafficking.

"Even if you give done a person in front of other people, but if you don't get the two-thirds vote of Congress, [you can't be expelled]. Theoretically, the Philippines is with the Hong Kong police. He's now detained there."

Enrile also cleared Lacson of the ethics case filed by the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption in September 2010 over the latter's refusal to undertake welfare subsidies.

"There's no ethical issues short on his part," Enrile said. "He has been charged, and a warrant issued for his arrest. He has decided not to come back to the Philippines because of that warrant of arrest. There's nothing unethical there as far as I can see it. I'm sure that will be how others will look at it."

Enrile added that there was no urgency for the Senate ethics committee chaired by Sen. Aloy Peter Cayetano to tackle Lacson's case.

"What is the urgency? To kick him out of the service? He has a case pending. Suppose the court will say he's not guilty. Then what is our basis?" Enrile said.

No automatic expulsion

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The Speaker said he would hand over the official documents on the case to the chair of the House ethics committee, Rep. Eric Singerman, at the resumption of session on Jan. 27 to get the ball rolling on the inquiry.

Among the documents is the request of a Davao member panel sent by the House to Hong Kong last November in relation to the court proceedings and parties official papers.

"We do not want to just rely on media reports," Belmonte said.

Same yardstick

Reacting to the senators' defense of Lacson, House Deputy Minority Leader Rodolfo Magsaysay said Congress has whether the Senate or the House, should use the same yardstick in dealing with colleagues in conflict with the law.

"In the private [sector] or in government, if you [are] convicted [of] corporations, if you [are] absent without leave], you're kicked out. So what makes a senator privileged such this kind of behavior?" Magsaysay said in a phone interview.

"I can't interview with the workings in the Senate. That's their unit ... But as a legislator, I am just wanting to what Gen. Claudio Singson said," she said.

Last weekend, Magsaysay joined Bohusyo Rep. Weldon Sy-Ki in calling for Singson's expulsion.

But Magsaysay yesterday said the only difference between Lacson and Singson was their plea of guilt or innocence.

She pointed out that Lacson had maintained innocence before even holding instead of fighting it out in court.

She added: "As elected public officials, we should be beyond reproach. Although Senator Lacson has not been convicted [or found] guilty in the merits case ... there's a different set of standards for public officials. We should certainly conduct ourselves differently. The more law that he's not a your he has been hiding from the law, isn't that a violation of the law?

"He has not performed his duties as a senator. What happens to his responsibility to the people who voted for him? Isn't he supposed to fight for his constituents? ... How can he perform effectively if he keeps on hiding?"

'Charot is right'

Tonight for further comment, Bello said: "As a fugitive from the law, Lacson should resign or be expelled." Bello said that if he resigns, there is no constitutional provision that he should be expelled. But there is an overwhelming ethical reason."

Bello said Lacson and his allies in the Senate should not obstruct the Senate's expulsion.

"You can't be a public official while defying the law. I do not see the difference to the runaway. Public ethics demands the resignation of both. So Charot is right. If you demand [Singson's] resignation, you should demand [that of Lacson]. No double standards," Bello said.

Reports from Jocelyn R. Uy, TJ Burgonio, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Michael Lim Ubac

DOT bats for Metro's undiscovered treasures

From page A1

locals will know the metropolis beyond being the premier gateway and capital city of the Philippines," he said. "For a start, there are special events in Metro Manila worth witnessing for January to March."

Lim encouraged sightseers to experience old and revered Filipino traditions on the streets of the capital, starting with the most celebrated Feast of the Black Nazarene in Quiapo on Sunday.

Manila is the site of a long-held police rescue that led to the death of eight Hong Kong tourists held hostage by a troubled former policeman in August last year. Since then, tourism officials have been working to erase the bad image the tragedy created.

Sto. Niño festivals

Lim said the "Bulong Bulong" festival in Pandacan and the "Lakbayan" festivity in Tondo are also worth witnessing. Both are part of a nationwide celebration of the Feast of the Sto. Niño on the third Sunday of this month.

The "Bulong Bulong" is a tribal dance by male and female performers garbed in colorful Filipiniana attire in honor of the Sto. Niño, who visited the same area being crushed by Spanish troops during colonial times.

On the other hand, the "Lakbayan" is a fun-filled street dancing celebration in honor of the Filipino representation of the Child Jesus.

PANDACAN FESTIVAL: The "Bulong-bulong" Festival is held annually in Pandacan, Manila, as part of the nationwide observance of the Feast of the Sto. Niño on the third Sunday of January. Teachers from Carlos P. Garcia High School in photo dance on the streets with the image of the Sto. Niño.

In Caloocan City's Marypaz, residents will hold the "Pajaran de Sto. Niño," a flamboyant parade of different images of the Child Jesus as thousands of devotees seeking miracles or favors will dance their way to the Ati-Atihan beat.

A similar event, the "Sumilao Festival," takes place in Pasig City.

Int'l Arts festival

In February, holiday makers may enjoy culture and style when the National Commission for Culture and the Arts will stage the International Arts Festival, which is aimed at highlighting the Filipinos' creativity through art exhibits, film shows and weaving workshops.

They may join the Fiesta Festival in Navotas City or the "Carabao Festival" in Makati City where major streets are reported to burst into a sea of color in a local version of Rio de Janeiro's Mardi Gras.

Held also in January, the Carabao aims to promote Makati's cultural heritage and underscore the importance of preserving the environment and natural resources.

Fertility rituals are open to couples trying to conceive when Pasay City honors the feast of St. Clare at the Sta. Clara Patrol Church on the second week of February.

The DOT's must-see list also includes the Summer Music Festival in Pasig City, the "Buwan ng Wika Pagdiriwang" in Lucena City on the month, and the "Obando Festival" in Municipalidad City in March. *Jocelyn R. Uy*

Oil firms cut price of LPG by 40¢

By Amy R. Remo

SOME OIL companies have slashed the price of cooking gas by 40 centavos per kilogram, to reflect a decline in the international contract price of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

The Department of Energy announced that Petron Corp., Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Petronas and Total (Philippines) adjusted their prices beginning Tuesday morning.

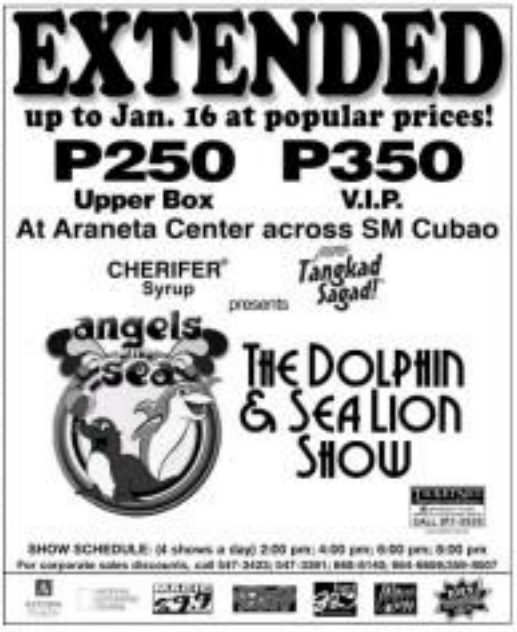
An 11-kg LPG cylinder sold by these companies now costs P440 less, excluding value-added tax. This brings the suggested retail price of a 900-unit tank to P774.50. The other oil firms had not responded to queries on their prices at press time.

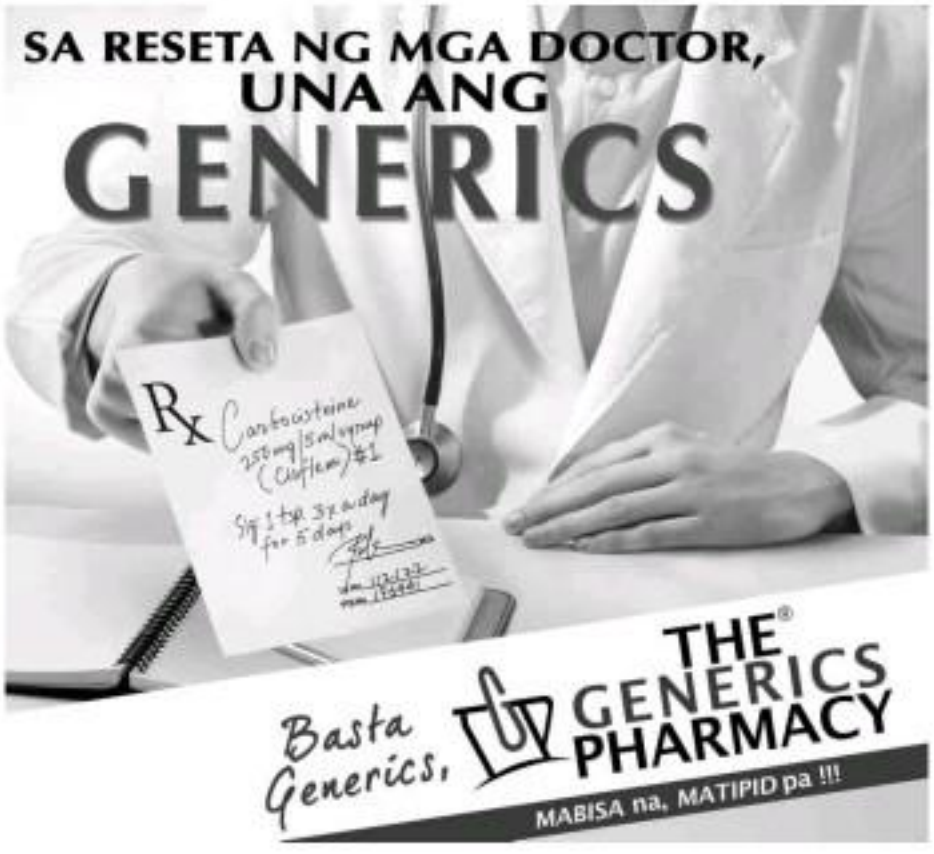
Other retailers, particularly members of the LPG Marketers Association (LPGMA), said they would not make any price adjustments unless a more substantial decline was posted by Jan. 15.

In a phone interview, LPGMA party-list Rep. Arnel Ty said LPG retailers would wait and see whether the downward trend would continue for a week or two before possibly implementing a price rollback later this month or in February.

Ty said the latest price rollback by the oil companies was "not a reflection of the movement in international market prices but rather a marketing move" to bring their prices closer to that of LPGMA member companies.

Based on the group's monitoring, the decline in the international contract price of LPG was only $20 per metric ton as of yesterday.





ACTUAL PHOTO This is the unedited photograph taken by the late barangay councilman Reynaldo Dagsa of his wife Arlene, daughter Reynalyn and mother-in-law Rosalia in front of his house in Barangay 18, Magsaysay, Caloocan City, and the intruders—the gunmen and the lookout—on New Year's Eve. The faces of the Dagsa family have been blurred for security reasons.

IN THE KNOW

A WITNESS interviewed in August 2005 described Antonio "Tonsy" Tenorio as of stocky build at 160 lbs., around 5'5" to 5'6" and had a brown complexion. He is said to be born Dagupeñ and his face is pockmarked.

According to NBI intelligence at the time, Tenorio is a car-loan consultant and auto dealer operating in Manila's Tondo district. He was not a member of what one witness Jessica Alfaro claimed to be Hubert Webb's gang. Tenorio was said to be 29 or 31 years old when the Vizconde massacre took place in 1991.

In her second affidavit, Alfaro suggest Tenorio as the one who took the knife from the kitchen drawer in the Vizconde house. Alfaro also claimed that Tenorio was the group's drug supplier.

On the other hand, Alfaro described Pilart as a good-looking mestizo of medium build, weighing about 130 to 140 lbs, standing 5'7" to 5'8" and fair-complexioned. According to reports, Pilart is a nephew of retired Police Gen. Marina Pilart, a former commander of the Capital Police Command.

Alfaro said Pilart stayed in one of the cars outside the Vizconde residence at the time of the crime. He alleged he acted as a look-out.

In cross-boarding last month, Justice department spokesperson Alicia Marquez said the rule on the 20-year prescriptive period would not apply to Pilart and Tenorio because they were not arraigned and presented to court during the trial for the Vizconde case. He also said the prosecution for the arrest of Pilart and Tenorio was still valid. *Jaime Bauzon*

Councilman had gun to fire back

From page A1

pushed car and fired at him, police said.

Gunmen at large

The gunmen, identified as Ariel Bautista Avellon remained at large, but his two bodyguards, Michael Gonzales Avellon and Rommel Oliva, are now in the custody of the Caloocan City Police, awaiting in Senior Insp. Jude Sanvoa.

Police erroneously reported earlier that Bautista had been arrested. Sanchez was tagged as a suspect. Pineda Bunggal, who was involved in the case, police said.

Avellon told the investigators that before the fatal shot, Dagsa had taken a picture of his slain assailants in front of the car.

The family had moved on the car's driver side for another group, which apparently was the assassin undetected view of his target, Avellon recalled.

They didn't even notice anyone approaching from behind, she said. Dagsa's daughter Reynalyn Dagsa-Bautista, 25, a GMA 7 camera, which had overdoors from the fall as well as traces of Dagsa's blood.

The runaway photograph, which the Inquirer first carried on its front page yesterday, spread rapidly to cyberspace, drawing inquiries from news organizations here and abroad.

The Canadian Broadcasting Corp. in Toronto and Sky News London asked the Inquirer for permission to use the photograph.

Wire service agencies also picked up the Inquirer story, while Philippine television network coverage of the Dagsa house the morning after the killings were on par with its story.

In contrast to the foreign media, local TV stations neither asked permission nor credited the Inquirer.

No nonsense peacekeeper

The photograph Dagsa took moments before he was fatally shot showed he was only a few meters away from the gunmen.

It could have been an easy shot for Dagsa had he drawn his own gun and fired at his attackers. As he had been trained in the Philippine Army Reserve Command, was a member of the Barangay Peacekeeping Action Team and the Citizen Crime Watch of the Philippine National Police.

"He responded to endless and tumbles, and confronted the most dangerous people in our area," said Henry Devilla, a close friend of the victim and himself a barangay peace officer. "He (Dagsa) was a no-nonsense peacekeeper but very compassionate to those who matured to change their ways."

For Dagsa's 10-year-old daughter Reynalyn, the last that her father took a long time to take the picture was also a sign that he was aware there was something wrong.

She knew her father to be a good photographer.

LEAD ME LORD Arlene Dagsa, her daughter Reynalyn and son Andrew stand before the coffin of her husband, Reynaldo Dagsa, who loved to sing to his daughter his favorite hymn "Lead Me Lord."

CUSTODY Alleged lookouts Michael Gonzales Avellon and Rommel Oliva are detained at the Caloocan police headquarters shortly after they were captured.

Bullet pierced heart

In college, Dagsa was already taking pictures during important occasions for friends and family. Until he became a barangay official, he had earned extra money by being a photographer during weddings and baptisms, among others, of friends and neighbors.

"When I heard a shot, I thought it was just a firecracker, but when I saw my father slump on the floor, I knew he was hit by something else. It was a gunshot. And the fact that my mom died and pierced through his heart. I saw him trembling in the pavement while clutching his chest," Reynalyn said in her worst wish.

The three suspects ran in different directions as Dagsa fell before his shocked family.

Arlene recounted how her daughter reached out for her father, who was bleeding profusely from his wounds. Arlene feared she was wounded she could barely utter, "I didn't know what to do," Arlene, a private nurse, said. "I was speechless for a while, then I started crying."

'Lead Me Lord'

The family rushed Dagsa to Mariano Alcejo, where hospital personnel tried to revive him, but to no avail.

At 12:08 a.m., he was pronounced dead.

"I will miss my papa. Who will take us and teach us from school? Who will sing to me 'Lead me Lord.' That's my favorite," Reynalyn cried, as she wiped the tears streaming down her face.

The 10-year-old plans to draw until she had been learning how to play the song for her father.

"Lead me Lord, lead me by the hand, and make me face the rising sun. Comfort me through all the pain (And life may bring)," she sang in tears.

Public Attorney's Office in touch ...

From page A1

e mail with the relatives of Lorna Vizconde, whose 18-year-old daughter Carmela was raped and killed in the June 1991 massacre in which his wife Estrellita, 47, and daughter Jennifer, 7, were also stabbed dead.

Vizconde said Alfaro only used phone cards to call them, fearing that a SIM card would give away her location.

Alfaro has lived abroad since the Pasadena Regional Trial Court found Webb and five others guilty of rape and homicide and gave them life sentences in Jan. 6, 2000, for the grisly deaths of the Vizconde women.

"Yes it is, there is already a threat against her, with the Webbs' pillar on charge her with libel, which is the case in Makati (Regional Trial Court Branch 61 of Judge Jesusita Arcangelo Trampe)," Acosta said in a telephone interview.

"We want an appraisal (from Alfaro). We want to get her to action to declare the (case against Webb et al.). We also want her to tell us what kind of help she needs, if there is any form of assistance she needs from the Department of Justice," she added.

Joey Pilart

Junior Secretary Leila de Lima announced yesterday that interrogators had wanted down a man named "Joey Pilart" in the United States and that she had directed them to determine if he was one of two persons implicated in the massacre who are still at large.

"I told them to access him so they can question him," De Lima said today in a weekly press conference. If found to be the man wanted in the killings, the government would seek his extradition to face charges in Manila, she said.

De Lima said she was baffled why in the two years decades there had been no effort to track down Pilart and Artemio Tenorio, the two disappeared after they were implicated by Alfaro in the massacre. (See *In the Know* on this page.)

The witness from the NBI said the police had been formed following a directive from President Aquino to investigate the massacre after the Supreme Court acquitted Webb and his cohorts although they can no longer be prosecuted for the killings. The Constitution prohibits this under the principle of double jeopardy.

Looking for Webbs' maid

Yesterday, De Lima said that there is "no need" to search program on the reinvestigation of two other sets of suspects,—a gang of thieves and a group of serial-action workers.

She said the team revisiting the cases against Webb et al. had been diverted to locate the Webbs' housekeeper who had testified that she washed Webb's bloodied shirt.

The team, she said, would also attempt to track down a boyfriend of Carmela mentioned by Alfaro. Webb, accusing to Alfaro, was a suitor of Carmela's and even he learned about the relationship, he planned a gang rape on Carmela.

De Lima also said investigators would study anew the documentary presented by Webb that was shown in the United States when the crime took place.

She added that among those who might be interrogated anew was immigration official Ferdinand Amoyel who stamped Webb's passport upon his supposedly left the country.

De Lima said while Alfaro had reportedly already refused to testify again, authorities continue to convince her to cooperate and cited flight risks in the case.

"We this point really we do not know the truth. Nobody can be sure about the truth behind this controversial and sensational crime," De Lima said. She said said the interrogation was all about establishing the truth.

Jessica's safety

In its decision last Dec. 14, the Supreme Court said it could not consider Alfaro a credible witness, and one reason given was that she was an "NBI asset."

That Alfaro is not credible also meant that evidence against Webb failed to prove his guilt beyond reasonable doubt, it said. Webb, 31, son of former Sen. Freddie Webb, was freed last month after spending 15 years in jail.

Acosta refused to give details about her office's efforts to reach Alfaro for security reasons. Earlier reports said Acosta's would head a team of DOJ lawyers who would fly abroad to get Alfaro's statement.

"We are worried about Jessica's safety should she come home," Acosta said, apparently in response to the plan to get Alfaro abroad. She was evasive when asked about plans to fly to where Alfaro is abroad.

Wrong Ventura

In another development, a man who identified himself as Conde Noel "Bong" Ventura swore the Inquirer last month promising De Lima's statement that appeared to implicate him in the crime.

Despite his power and influence, he was supposed to act fairly and justly. I will ask the secretary of justice to be fair, just and to ensure her statement," Ventura wrote in a fax. 11 e-mail.

Ventura, who described himself as a 41-year-old engineer living in the United States since 1995, presented De Lima's statement that she had received a "tip" that the Inquirer implicated in the massacre was not an "eyewitness" as written in the police blotter, but a "Conde or a Bong Ventura."

Ventura said he had e-mailed De Lima his picture, a copy of his passport and fingerprints to prove that he was not the murder suspect.

Luistro decides to make a run for it

From page A1

the Department of Education (DepEd) has resolved to a health regimen he had skipped since becoming a member of the Aquino Cabinet last year.

Literally behind him in running laps in the executive team, from undersecretaries to assistant secretaries also hoping to be fitter this year.

"I will try to be healthy because I realize that the work can be taxing," said the 49-year-old official, who is known to arrive in his office ahead of work hours and frequents night schedules every day.

"One New Year's resolution as a team is 'We start our exercise morning or late, and the meeting or time then we go out together,'" Luistro told this reporter yesterday. His team holds executive meetings three times a week.

Luistro said his heart hit the pavement on Monday night at DepEd's neighboring Philipparts drama, completing an hour-long run walk.

"If I want to do a good job, I have to take care of my health. I cannot afford to be sick," Luistro said.

Image change

He also had one other wish for his department: an image change.

Luistro noted that negative public perception had stuck with the DepEd, from claims of corruption and cheating to jokes about teachers selling an assortment of wares at school.

"For whatever reason, true or not, they always say DepEd is the most corrupt agency. People ask me if there are still teachers who sell (veggies to) (native pork sausage). It's unfortunate to be a public perception," Luistro said.

LUISTRO

Now, admits I think is unfair," he said.

Integrity

Luistro earlier called on employees to leave bad habits behind and start fresh this year, emphasizing honesty and integrity in public service.

"I don't have something concrete in mind but I hope our schools continue on basic things like honesty, no cheating, be our students, our teachers to be able to show publicly that we are attempting to change that image," he said.

Luistro said that, by and large, the DepEd was a good department. "But I'm telling myself, our people, 'Why is this perception still there?' I think we need to keep discussing it and make sure that it is able to change that image," he said.

Receiving the largest budget in years, the DepEd has promised to make "judicious" use of its P190-billion budget for this year, focusing on addressing perennial shortages in classrooms, teachers, textbooks and other instructional materials.

Noynoy set to issue 'open skies' order

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT Aquino yesterday said he would issue an executive order that would pave the way for open skies in the country's secondary airports.

Foreign carriers may fly into such airports as Cebu, Iloilo, Zamboanga and Laoag.

"Secondary gateways in the form of the executive order," President Aquino told reporters after Vice Admiral Alexander Pama's assumption of office as the Philippine Navy's flag officer in command at the Navy headquarters in Manila.

"There is already an existing EO (but allowed) so-called packet open skies. So, we are just realigning the same," President Aquino said referring to Executive Order No. 219.

Mr. Aquino said there are already foreign airlines that have expressed interest to participate in the liberalized air travel.

It seems close to the doubting of the open skies executive order said flying between domestic airports would remain the exclusive right of local carriers as cabotage would be practiced.

Cabotage is the privilege to fly passengers between two areas within the country.

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Shell Pandacan Terminal receives Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) Award for exemplary environmental performance

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation's ("Shell") Pandacan Terminal was recently conferred with the Lakan ng Lawa Award, a citation given by the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) for socially responsible companies in various industries operating in the Laguna Lake Region, during the 26 Public Disclosure Program and Awarding of Industries' Environmental Performance held at the Hotel Rembrandt in Quezon City.

Shell's Pandacan Terminal attained a Blue Rating from the LLDA for its consistent compliance and exemplary performance in environmental protection by complying with LLDA's effluent standards and regulatory requirements, which includes timely submission of statutory reports, no violations or pending cases, and transparency in operations.

Shell Pandacan Terminal Manager Winston Wong and Sustainable Development Manager Ronald Suarez received the award from LLDA General Manager Rodrigo Cabrera and Program Managing Group Chairperson Michael Cloe during the awarding ceremony.

"We are truly honored to receive this recognition from the Laguna Lake Development Authority, as it affirms our continuing commitment to ensure safety and environmental protection in our operations, consistent with our business principles and in line with both Philippine and international standards," says Wong.

The Shell Pandacan Terminal has been operating in the country for more than 90 years with no major incident because health, safety, security and environment are paramount concerns for Shell. While the oil industry is not a big water user, Shell recognizes that it has a contribution to make to preserve the integrity of water systems, especially in areas where the company operates. The Shell Pandacan Terminal is equipped with facilities to separate hydrocarbon fluids from its discharges to meet regulatory specifications at all times. Its Wastewater Treatment System features an Ultra Filtration System as the final water treatment, thereby exceeding LLDA effluent standards.

Through the years, Shell Pandacan Terminal has been recognized for a number of environmental best practices. In 2003, it received an Environmental Award of Merit from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) for the Pandacan Scale Down "Green Buffer Zone" Project, crediting Shell's compliance with DENR standards and contributions to rehabilitate the Pasig River. On the same year, the depot's fence line barangays (communities) endorsed Shell for the National Dangal ng Bag Award, a citation given by the Sagip Pasig Movement for exemplary efforts to conserve and preserve the environment and the state of the Philippine Rivers. In 2009, Nestlé Philippines recognized Shell, through its Greening the Supply Chain Award, for its Effluent Quality Improvement Project (EQUIP), which addresses the effective effluent or wastewater management in Shell depots nationwide, including Pandacan.

These positive achievements reflect Shell's drive and determination to meet energy demand through technology and innovation applied in the right way, with respect for communities and the environment.

The Laguna Lake Development Authority recognizes Shell Pandacan Terminal with a "Lakan ng Lawa" award for its exemplary commitment to ensure environmental protection in its operations.

Daily wastewater collection at Shell Pandacan Terminal.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Requiem for 'delicadeza'

EDITORIAL

IT IS a testament to the resilience of feudal politics that House flor Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson has defended shamelessly his son, Rep. Ronald Singson, over calls for the latter's expulsion from the House of Representatives in connection with the drug charges he is facing in Hong Kong. The congressman was arrested by customs officers at Hong Kong's international airport in July and later charged with carrying a vial of cocaine weighing about 28 grams in his hand luggage. In an instance of son worship and a betrayal of his ignorance about the legislative system despite having been a member of the House of Representatives himself, the governor challenged his son's detractors to expel first fugitive Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who's outside the jurisdiction of the House.

The statement shows that Chavit Singson will do everything to deflect the blows against his son. To some, this is but a touching paternal gesture, but to most, it is nothing but political highhandedness, an indication of how delicadeza or sense of propriety has disappeared from the vocabulary and from the consciousness of Filipino politicians.

The governor said calls for his son's resignation or expulsion are premature since the Hong Kong court has not rendered yet a verdict. He said his son would not plead guilty to drug trafficking but to the "lesser" offense of cocaine possession. To Chavit Singson apparently, the guilty plea is not enough reason for his son to be barred or to resign from his post. If this is not the height of insensitivity, we don't know what is. Earlier, the congressman's lawyers told a Hong Kong court on Dec. 31 that he would admit to drug trafficking when the hearing resumes on Jan. 26.

But the House leadership is showing the same insensitivity, the same rabid arrogance of power. House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II said a guilty plea—even to drug-trafficking charges!—does not mean automatic expulsion from the House of Representatives. He appealed to the younger Singson to resign and spare his colleagues the rigors of an ethics committee hearing and a plenary vote on his expulsion. The remarks indicate the House's reluctance to move against Singson and save its reputation.

Not that the House has much of a reputation to speak of. Since the Hong Kong arrest, it has not even initiated an ethics inquiry into allegations against the Ilocos Sur congressman. What the House leadership did was to assign Deputy Majority Leader Romeo Sydeco Quimbo, an ex-officio member of the ethics committee, to "monitor" the case, whatever that means.

What all this means is that our lawmakers are usually the first to protect the law-breakers among themselves. Or, in the case of Lacson, the first to run from the law when it puts him in an inconvenience. Chavit Singson may have come up with a non sequitur and a fallacious argument, but that doesn't mean Lacson should continue to enjoy his fugitive's life and semisecret R&R. He may have arguably some basis for going underground in the past administration when he was prosecuted for his involvement in the killings of public relations professional Rodolfo Diaon and his driver, but the situation does not obtain now. He must emerge from hiding and face the music.

But even in hiding, Lacson continues to demand a mass resignation by the Department of Justice although the regional trial court has turned down the motion repeatedly. Justice Secretary Leila de Lima has urged Lacson to come out and make himself subject to the legal proceedings since his continued hiding is an act of contempt against the court and the justice system overall. But Lacson continues to defy the law, which he had sworn to uphold when he was a police officer and when he became a senator. He has turned out to be an embarrassment for the Senate and the government at large.

Lacson and Singson embody the worst of our lawmakers. Both chambers of Congress apparently operate from the basest, lowest instinct: survival at all cost, even at the cost of public trust. Both chambers have constituted themselves into a death chorus. They themselves are singing the dirge for delicadeza.

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Are SC justices getting double compensation?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

ILUMINADO UCOLIT spokesman Jose Midas Marquez said in a letter to the editor last Monday that Sec. Benjamin Abalos is on the editorial wavelength. The column was about the Court having put an end to its decision declaring the Truth Commission illegal. The Court had said that's now the law, sanctioning the creation of the Truth Commission.

Look where talking! I wrote: The Court also ordered the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET) (although there is no law or constitutional provision authorizing it). What the Constitution provides is for the whole Supreme Court to sit as the tribunal to resolve conflicts regarding the election of the president and vice president. But what it did was to create a special body (the PET) composed of justices of the SC. So that, Members of the PET receive additional compensation of P100,000 a month, even after a case has been terminated or when there is no case pending.

There is no law authorizing the Court to do this, according to former Justice Florenz Regalado, who was a member of the PET. The Court rejected Macalintal's petition, but he has filed a motion for reconsideration.

In his letter, Marquez said the PET is composed of all 15 justices and that "it was unanimous with only Justice Regalado dissenting." Article VIII of the Constitution, said it limitedly complies...not impossibly defies...the constitutional directive."

If that is so, then all 15 justices are guilty of receiving double compensation. Aside from their salaries and allowances, the justices of the highest tribunal also are receiving additional compensation as members of PET. They are no different from officials and board members of government-owned and -controlled corporations and government financial institutions who have special, discretionary pension allowances and bonuses.

Marquez also said the justices are not getting P100,000 a month as PET members. They are getting "way, way below what Cruz mentally assigned." He said that he was not authorized to say the exact amount. How much less? P50, P30, P1, P1,000 or P10,000/mo? Why is he ashamed to say it?

Truth to tell, the justices should not get even P1 as additional compensation because that is double compensation prohibited by law. Moreover, they are still collecting compensation even when there is no work being done by PET. Isn't that a violation of the policy of "No work, no pay"?

The government woefully lacks funds for essential services and in fact squeezes the taxpayers for more revenues, but here are the "honorables" justices of the Court, like the members of Congress, solemnly appropriating hefty sums of millions of pesos of money that we pay for themselves. But leave it to the highest court of the land to declare that what they are doing is perfectly legal even if the helpless taxpayers who are footing the bill think what they are doing is plainly and simply immoral.

Anyway, Macalintal who is questioning the constitutionality of the PET was quite to write his own letter to the editor to protect the consistency of his stance.

"This refers to the issue of the unstable and compromise Court Administrator Justice Jose Midas Marquez, published in your January 2 issue," Macalintal's letter began, "refuting certain portions of the December 20 column titled 'Supreme Court on the spot'. Justice Marquez denied that each SC justice receives a monthly allowance of P100,000 as members of the PET although he admitted that each justice receives a reasonable allowance which is way way below what Cruz mistakenly allegedly in his column."

To his credit, Cruz, since he is working mathematically in his assertion that each justice receives P100,000 monthly allowance as member of the PET, Mr. Cruz was merely quoting from my column for Inquirer.net filed with the Supreme Court on December 20 when it denied my petition to abolish the PET where the SC justices designated themselves as members and, in turn, grant themselves monthly allowances of P100,000 with or without exercise (sacrifice) or even if the said case has already been terminated. It is my position that the creation of PET is unconstitutional because the Constitution gives the responsibility of deciding electoral cases of presidents and vice presidents to the SC "en banc" sitting en banc". There is nothing in the Constitution or any law authorizing the SC justices to create the PET and give themselves such allowances without or even if case has already been terminated.

"Therefore, except for the one-shot the assignation of the PET, the column ... on the aforesaid issue was fair and honest. There was nothing 'malicious' on the issue of P100,000 monthly allowance of the SC justices as members of the PET in considering that it was clearly alleged in my aforesaid motion for reconsideration from where Mr. Cruz apparently based his commentary. While Justice Marquez admitted that each SC justice receives a 'reasonable allowance' as PET's members, he overlooked to disclose how much."

How much is "reasonable"? What is reasonable to already well-paid justices may not be reasonable to taxpayers presenting under heavy taxes and groaning every time it comes for it. Anyway, the members of the PET become busy are high time posters for which they are already paid. They are not supposed to be paid again for being a member of the PET. That is clearly double compensation even if they call it "reasonable."

* * *

KAPBAYAN MOVES: Kapbayan or Manila, the original and oldest Bonifacio forum, will resume this Monday (Jan. 16) at the Diamond Hotel on Roxas Boulevard. President Rodrigo Duterte has been invited to be the first guest. All patriotics are invited.

Get him out

PUT IT OUT Ping Lacson!

That was Chavit Singson's reaction to some congressmen's suggestion that his son, Ronald, the representative of the first district of Ilocos Sur, be expelled from Congress. Ronald Singson was arrested last year at the Hong Kong airport after he was found carrying 28 grams of cocaine and charged with drug trafficking. Ronald has pleaded guilty to the lesser offense of drug using, but the Hong Kong prosecutors are adamant. Ronald's lawyer is ready to bail Ronald's staple and up pleading guilty to trafficking anyway. If so, said the congressmen, then he should be booted out of their ranks, unless he does the honorable thing and resigns.

Chavit fumed. "The senators are prosecutors and biased against my son. Ronald will answer by himself all the accusations thrown at him. Let us meet for his return. Why not expel Sen. Ser Lacson first? He has a pending warrant of arrest. Bat mauna-una (Let's)."

Well, why not expel them both?

I agree completely. Why not expel Ping Lacson from the Senate? He has been given every opportunity to clear his name. The list of funds befalling him should be surrender and he declined it on every occasion. Or if he does not, he is distinguished. We have a new president and a new justice secretary both of whom may be expected to give him a fair shake. I'm convening his resignation, or declared to have his arrest order recalled first before he surrenders, you a more deliberate of the law a mental as for any sentiment. That aside, quite apart from what he is being charged with, sometimes a general he coming in in a matter of flame. (Is Chavit his supporter. Why not expel him first?

But just as well, why not expel his son instead? Or simultaneously with Ping? What is so premature about the congressmen's reaction? What is so biased about the world's condemnation of his son? The expulsion is well past due. Ronald Singson should have been expelled from Congress the very moment he was caught in Hong Kong hugging cocaine.

Unlike Philippine authorities, the Hong Kong authorities may not be paid to look the other way. It is true that Ronald's crime is one that nobody minds—but when they say they found 28 grams of cocaine in Ronald Singson's possession, they are telling the truth, whether Ronald is a user or a pusher (say shabu) only to the Hong Kong courts. Or indeed only to Ronald's personal well-being. A month ago, the authorities became big supporting in a Hong Kong cell for a short spell or a long one. Assuming of course he doesn't jump bail and try to fend off all attempts to get him to Bermuda Interior.

But whether he is in jail or perhaps in the manor in Congress, Why should we wait for Ronald's return to find out whether he pleaded guilty or not to the trafficking charge? If he is "only a user," that makes it all right? I personally shouldn't greatly mind if he had been found guilty of carrying a bomb in his luggage. But cocaine is another thing entirely. That is a substance that addles the brain. That is a substance that makes people go on a power trip. As if being a congressman were not enough. What is more, Congress can broaden its right of inquiry that one of its members is not a subject of cocaine and not a cocker of it? It's perfectly fine that we have someone not knowledgeable the kinds of laws we are to be governed by?

Congress should have expelled Ronald Singson way back last year. Chavit's argument is fair is merely a variation of the same thing his former president plotted to that someone not too long ago. GMA also argued that she had a right to stay in despite the coming in of the new president, Joseph Estrada, "Erap" again because she was innocent until proven guilty. In both cases, the guilt was patent. There was no doubt that it was GMA who was talking to Virgilio Garcillano, plotting among others the kidnapping of a school student who had witnessed fraud in her station, and there is no doubt Ronald Singson was caught in cocaine-using in Hong Kong, he cannot claim to have been set up by me.

Fortunately for GMA, the interpretation of her innocence or guilt lay by way of impeachment only with the congressmen, who were not beyond being bought. Unfortunately for Chavit, the final interpretation of Ronald's innocence or guilt lie by way of trial with the Hong Kong judges, who are past buying and who are probably still smarting from the memory of their compatriots slaughtered by a crazed cop in the Luneta.

But the point is not merely that their guilt—as Ronald's case is the very least of using cocaine, which is crime in itself—is patent. The point is that public officials may not remain public officials when even the slightest doubt is cast on their ability to attain a certain performance. That was what I kept saying in GMA's case. The presumption of innocence-meant only that we might not put GMA until she was proven guilty. It did not mean that we should continue to endure her until she was proven guilty. A public office is a public trust. A public official may not claim, or cling-on to, office on the ground that he has not been proven guilty. A public official must conduct, or cling to, office on the ground that he has proven himself innocent.

These are two different things. A claim to public office is based on the possession of the highest virtues, not on the possession of the lowliest right, the right as he presumed innocent until proven guilty. It is based on conduct, not on the lowest common denominator. A claim to public office is based on the possession of the qualities of Caesar's wife, not on the possession of the qualities of Shirley's wife, or the possession of vacuity. It's time we started to insist that we demand the standards of public office that have sunk so low.

By all means expel Ping. But expel Ronald, too.

Justice delayed, but not denied

WORLD VIEW

Mark Jordet

What's at stake is not just punishment, but also political truth, which requires setting limits on official rationalizations for repression

JUNTA LAST month, the former dictator Gen. Jorge Videla was convicted and sentenced to life in jail for his role in Argentina's "dirty war" of the 1970s, including the torture and execution of untried prisoners. Three officers were prosecuted alongside him. Videla's conviction marks a turn in many years after the restoration of democracy in Argentina.

Prosecuting Videla and other perpetrators was made possible by rulings from two Supreme Court decisions that annulled the amnesty granted to political and military leaders in Argentina and other countries in the subprime in part of a transition to democracy he set aside. It has held that accountability for the crimes of the dictators is a human rights—and thus outrages the impunity granted by many Latin American decisions as a condition of allowing democratic transitions.

The most recent decision of the regional court, in 2010, held unconstitutional the 1979 Brazilian amnesty law protecting military officials from prosecution for abuses committed during the country's 21-year military dictatorship. The provisions of the Brazilian Amnesty Law that prevent the investigation and sanctioning of torturers human rights violations," the tribunal ruled, are "incompatible with the American Convention." The tribunal is to require that those who were in charge torture for the forced disappearance of hundreds of 70 persons is to not guilty of any crimes.

In these cases, crimes, serious abuses, and advocacy organizations united in the regional human rights court after exhausting their options at home. The domestic political and legal climate was still not ready to have squarely the ghosts of the bullies' home past. Brazil's own High Court, for example, had recently sustained the controversial amnesty of the amnesty law, which was supported by successive Brazilian governments, all of which, including Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's Lula or Lula administration, resisted military prosecutions for the crimes committed by them in the military dictatorship.

In Argentina, even under President Raúl Alfonsín, the first democratic civilian president following the military government, extrajudicial economic power used by the country's police increased the number of all homicides. Amnesty abuses were commuted by Perón's amnesty amnesties during the 1990s—crimes for which former President Alberto Fujimori is now paying.

All of this shows the tremendous of civilian control and institutions, despite 30 years of democracy. New democracies face many enforcement—and, often, economic—challenges. Making the police and the security services accountable can be a particularly tall order in the early years of a new and often fragile democratic regime. But are giving up on accountability despite the passage of time, usually an important message about human rights, and the democratic nature of those officers as "crimes against humanity."

This is not just a matter of Latin America's particular legacy. Often, political leaders and military and security elites have proven so shrewd and resourceful in defending positions as they devised themselves entering and left and in doing injustice. They should never be confident that they can live once free. The International Criminal Court has no statute of limitations, and no rightly continue to pursue and prosecute the perpetrators of the Holocaust.

Years later, today's is easier to not just punishment, but also political truth, which requires setting limits on official rationales for repression. Argentina's military regime, often ill, framed its "dirty war" as an offensive against so-called "terrorists," rather than in which it was: massive, arbitrary persecution of citizens with diverse ideologies and class backgrounds.

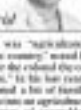
That lesson, founded down along with the judgments against Videla, is important to any country that is trying to establish a global rule of law. Tyrants everywhere—and more than a few democrats—would do well to take note.

Project Syndicate

Mark Jordet, a native of Argentina, is professor of comparative law at New York Law School and the author of "Extraordinary Justice."

P-Noy's holiday break

AT LARGE



Rina Jimenez-David

IF ALL went our dreams, lawyers, lenders, plumbers, electricians, drivers and house help in at our back and still, to be available when they are most needed, and to take our memories to management. But we ourselves, as workers and employers, demand our leisure, expect those who pay us our services to understand that we need to be appreciated for our work, and not be treated like we're used.

It's much the same with our public officials. We expect them to be on their job 24/7, and in the case of audio announcers, ready to take calls at her on the streets to help motorists. We expect fast and reasonable results for ourselves, but feel whatever when elected officials declare a vacation.

This occurred to me while reading news about P-Noy's Christmas break in Baguio, where he remained for one week, unavailable to the public except for his activities and, more important, of the members of his entourage.

In what has sounded like a common refrain, the President pleaded for some "private me time" in the cool climes of Baguio. Some critics have noted that such behavior is not befitting of a President who so much lately, and thus, having been elected President, he owes all his waking hours to the Filipino people. After all, didn't he say so when all his boxes?

Well, not exactly. To be honest, his actions were necessary time off, we may find our prime ministers and less effective in the post we elect to him. Is it outward, tired and discouraged President will inevitably make wrong choices and harmful decisions and we wouldn't want that, would we? Forgive P-Noy's slavish attitude?

BOB HERBERT shared the year-ending goodbyes in a great way, Col. Dubbardo Rodon, '90, father of my sister-in-law Doreen. I first found of the colonel's son-in-law's father's passing when our in family gatherings, wanting experiments (I hoped for me, and then extending me the last chance he got.

His objective was, of course, to get me to write about his abiding passion, which he shared with whoever was willing to suggest the time and occasion. In the words of my brother

Anniversaries

LOOKING BACK

Lorelei N. Ocampo

GRANDMOTHER Call plans are meant to remind the ruling public of significant historical events. But people who open them on time can see not necessarily fond of history. Some acquire such commemorations cut plans on the assumption that these meetings those in from the symbolic ceiling celebrate. With a commemorative plan on the front part of their vehicle, they can get past an eagle-eyed traffic enforcer.

To avoid business or window commemoration, the Land Transportation Franchising only applies to the Subsidiaries of those cut plans on the anniversaries from the National Historical Commission (NHC) regarding historical significance. To discourage people from requesting a cut plan every year for the same event, the NHC only certifies "significant" events with "milestone" anniversaries (5 years, 10, and 50, then half centuries from 100 years to 150, 200 and so on.

Going over the NHC list of anniversaries for commemoration in 2011, I noted that all the 50th year anniversaries fall with significant events. Perhaps a person's place in history helps in determining whether to remain or expire. This year we have the 50th anniversary of the deaths of Jorge Vanden (Oct. 19, 1961), Chief Justice Miguel Moran (Aug. 20, 1961), and Linguist Geminiano Cruz (Aug. 20, 1961). Then there's the 50th anniversary of the deaths of Abad. J. Kiram, author of Sulu (1936), and Epifanio de los, one of the first members of the Katipunan (Dec. 30, 1936). Centennial death anniversaries include Jose Rizal (Dec. 30, 1911), Antonio Luna (June 5, 1911), revolutionary general and, according to some, unrecognized president of the Philippines Miguel Malvar (Jan. 22, 1911), one of Rizal's primary personal biographer and author of the first Filipino novel Pedro Paterno (March 1, 1911). Others include revolutionary general Mariano Trias (July 1911), and Ana Maria Rizal (July 30, 1911) who was buried in the Manila

Continuity

CHILDREN HATE to have fallen asleep on the road to wake up with pressure that'll pass rules, limits if they ramp up and down. Beholden, sometimes even-comment, grandmothers are denied out in polka-dot dresses and, for good measure, an occasional grandfather just ran the act too with terrible dotted pajamas.

Those are news years meant, marking an abyss of magic-jumping up and down to add to your height, running down hanging to snow because he doesn't mind dough with polka-dot clothes. Some households will have everyone running cans and boxes filled with coins. Everywhere some team back relatives jingling foreign coins, because the price was losing value so quickly.

Polka-dots apparel and shaking coins are still not enough. There's still the mandatory accusation of round fruits that must be in the house on New Year's Eve, amid the cries and of fireworks.

I used to tell my mother, who followed those practices religiously (and true, that good fortune) and something that can be suggested, that I'm not a fan of round fruits. To avoid a premature abuse I pursue about being respectful of other people's beliefs. As long as they don't force anyone. I did vote dough that I would not participate such practices with my own children, preferring that ever hum about a good life coming from hard sweat and thrift (including not spending them on fireworks).

So, Jan Dec. 31, I found myself wearing my mother. "Isn't polka-dots," She later gloated. "We ended up with a ruby in a restaurant bar, sentimental book thanks and pumpkin and nuts apples (you need eight, lucrative in December), now hundreds number one you get? as well as Chinese oranges and Chinese yuan.

Needless this, mother's my mother's delight, I found how my grandpa when I was Chinese like to have at home the New Year's. No, they haven't been practically modified to become round fruits because the 84-kilometer of the fruit, "ong lai," sounds like "prosperity coming", the Chinese are down as lucky fruits as well.

Some of the homes at the store warned that I was going through the principles and asked me what they were for and I found myself explaining. Before I knew it, one of the other buyers was asking if I knew what I should I get? "Any have to be in threes?" I realized the had seen the three principles in the shopping baskets.

And then another buyer asked if I was buying 13 pieces of 13 different kinds of the fruits. I smiled and answered no, tempted to say I wasn't doing this for good luck or teaching Math.

Crossings

Anthropologists studies about rituals have emphasized how these gestures help to reduce people's fears and anxieties. It is very surprising that we have so many rituals around the new year, ranging from the food we eat to the clothes we wear to the 12 o'clock noise. Surrounded by family, friends, and emotional, given us a sense of control over the future.

For all the optimism with the Aquino presidency, I still sense Filipinos feeling very pessimism about finances. The shopping malls—except those frequented by BPO workers—are dead. Many people are afraid to spend money, more than ever, for fear of more traffic gridlocks. People seemed to be hanging on to their money, relying on "savers" in forecasts and advice of the magical, prosperity-yielding rituals.

Many say that some of the New Year practices are precautionary in nature. Don't eat fish, for example, because it will slip on the floor as part of the New Year's Eve celebrations because of the consumption of hand-in-mouth carnival, i.e., you don't want to have an excess year of chicken-like "tying feathers, crying tales" (sisi tumbok, tari pekit), or much other bad-luck omens associated.

Even Chinese-Filipino singer Basil Valdez seemed me in Filipino-hating some tongue-in-cheek silence to show how ridiculous these practices can be: for example, don't sweep on the house because your luck will sweep away; don't serve food unless those have finished mixing because your luck will run off, and finally, to be wary of visitors or other snubbing—that way, you will not receive saving (money!)

But the communal magic continues, and that includes the fireworks. It's not convinced Filipinos use fireworks to scare away evil spirits. The fireworks are really meant as expressions of happiness and hope for the future. I think those people who really like the local Chinese tradition happen to like fire for many fashion for fun or in the form of entertainment. (The Chinese emperors learned a studio control metal, a device from these words.)

Just as polka-dots and round fruits might bring in money during this year, the fireworks also represent wealth in the form of sage. Recently in Davao City, I heard people saying they were buying the 20 because firecrackers are banned there. "Bilangdyan dito it's sad here," they called.

Firecrackers are indeed scary, unless someone hurts a finger or worse, but I don't think the government can do anything—any campaign shouldn't stop with using Mendel Zodiac injured by firecrackers but should also question the superstition of firecrackers bringing in happiness. Those pieces of injuries should have the caption, "Mangyo ka sa 3" or something to that effect.

Connecting

So, why didn't go off with my mother to buy fruits? I didn't do not because of time and annoyance but because I thought of the ritual as important for another reason: creating a sense of community.

My mother went has been very ill for some time now, and, after a long stay in the hospital, she is now pretty much confined at home. I knew, though, that because she's always been so independent and active, so constantly going out of the house is important for her, although the last few kinds of her sense of place and state, she could feel the holiday anxieties and the connecting with people. I felt an assignment for her to feel the new meetings as well as a new year.

Chinese new's dramas. It's things to do, ways of connecting the past to the future and, more importantly of connecting people to their community.

It was a quiet New Day's Eve in my house—just a few friends and our own siblings, no polka-dot clothes. We had a full dinner and sat around to talk. I thought of the year 2010, which was not an easy one because of illnesses in the family, but I thought not of a crap I made in Davao just two weeks earlier with my children as more relatives with whom we had lost touch. There was the cousin right after graduating, the sibling of a former student in Cagayan de Oro. I thought of all kinds of roles: sometimes as the university with students, with faculty, with the staff, and how all these are, in their own ways, kinds of passage too, of continuity and of connections.

Maybe's to be great if we could see the same year, and not just the New Year, to practice the many rituals of connection? Perhaps we'd end up worrying less about superstitions, or more in knowing doesn't community in and investor our lives.

Comments are welcome at rsa Facebook Ana Mga.

Problem is enforcement

THE MMC Week's Eve revelry, as usual, has resulted in injuries to many people and even death for some, simply because most government officials do not strictly enforce regulations concerning the use of firecrackers, fireworks and firearms. It seems that Davao City is the only exception. That peaceful southern city has shown time and again that how true it is that can be celebrated without using firecrackers and other harmful explosives.

In many parts of the country, law enforcers are good only at issuing warnings and admonitions, but they do practically nothing to arrest violators, except in a very few instances. Some should be placed squarely on the COP officials for not enforcing the ban on the use of firecrackers.

Another glaring example of unenforced regulations is the anti-drug directive prohibiting police and military personnel in civilian attire from entering beer houses, disco, bars and other entertainment establishments without specific mission orders. Despite the ban, a number of these still frequents those places to have "a good time." They even refuse to deposit or surrender their firearms to the designated personnel of those establishments. Moreover, they expect management to offer them free food and drinks.

I have observed that sometimes when the girls working in such places would refuse to give in to the caprices of abusive law enforcers, hell would subsequently be made just for consequences established-owned patronized. In some instances, the girls would be forced to undress and perform indecent acts as pictures would be taken and used as evidence.

In the past, erring police and military personnel patronizing such establishments were placed squarely on the hot seat by the media for publicity and the "campaign" was short-lived because law enforcers did not feel comfortable apprehending one of their own. As violators are back in line, same as usual.

It is just like the cat-catching, anti-smuggling, anti-loitering, anti-talkwalk smoking, anti-smoking and other law enforcement drives. After a few weeks or so, nobody cares anymore. We have many laws and ordinances meant to put order in our communities, but many of them are being ignored or not enforced, until they are forgotten altogether. This happens because most of our local and national leaders lack political will.

There are, however, exceptions. For example, in the State, Bay Passport, Olongapo, Davao and Puerto Princesa, laws and ordinances are strictly enforced all the time. There is why infractions are almost reduced to. Why leaders in other places cannot do the same is very frustrating. "Siyempre ang mga," the term applied to individual and government officials that runs with a lump and end in a whimper, is a way of life among many Filipinos. This is one reason progress in our country is slow!

—MELCHOR ARAGON JR.,
aguilar.m.1111@yahoo.com

LETTERS

Nothing wrong with helping people in need

I LIKED always best Gozzini columnist Conrad de Quiros in high esteem for his courageous analyses of important issues like t must 'expose' my professed disappointment with his lies. Di-cabasa called "Hangover," where he unfairly attacked television host Willie Revillame on the issue of giving hoberhands.

For instance, De Quiros claims that Revillame has been the subject of "several humiliation cases," presumably from his forum on wowowee.ph ABS-CBN. I do not know Revillame personally and the little I know about him I've read only from the newspapers. That at the first time that I've read about "sexual harassment cases" against him, and he Quiros may have imbibed too much alcohol during the holidays as to be unable to check his facts. His it's a serious accusation that reeks of malice. Perhaps Revillame should even ask his lawyers whether sifted suit may be feasible.

Then, De Quiros also lays the blame on Revillame for the 1 Tres unarmed, which he calls a "fad." My own observation is that after a detailed investigation, authorities filed charges of criminal negligence resulting in homicide and serious physical injuries against a number of ABS-CBN officials and staff, but not against Revillame. As far as I know, Revillame visited the wakes of every fatality and gave their families enough financial assistance to did this without any TV crews in tow.

Lastly, I resent De Quiros' insinuation that my comments in Revillame's show "are kind dry the every-joyful devoid of their misery-able lives and made to look as though they are the luckiest people in the world." Nothing could be further from my self-righteousness." I have watched only a few episodes of the note-defiance "Wowowee" and when's now aired over TV5, "Willing Willie," and I find Revillame's empathy with the poor genuine and sincere. The people who make the show's viewers are mostly from the lower classes, and Revillame listens to every one of them with compassion and understanding. In short, he gives them respect. What's so distasteful about helping people in desperate need of help?

—WILTON CASTRO,
wcastro1954@yahoo.com

No legal assistance for OFW 'Clarissa'

THIS IS a reminder to the assistance issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs on Dec. 11, with the heading "PH Embassy in Riyadh Assisted Fully OFW Sentenced from Riyadh."

To set the record straight, it was Migrante-Al Khobar that directly provided assistance to OFW "Clarissa" after she was sentenced of "adultery" and jailed. She was convicted because no local lawyer was hired by the Philippine Embassy in Saudi Arabia to defend her during her trial.

Migrante-Al Khobar in fact had to send its welfare officer to attend to her case in Hafar Al Batin jail among with a Philippine Embassy representative to further investigate her case.

When we started investigating her case upon her parents' request for our assistance, we formally asked the Philippine Embassy to help her by hiring a local lawyer, but the Embassy did not give her any.

Instead of hiring a local lawyer for her defense, the Philippine consular team chose to believe that she was too raped, that she was maintaining an illicit relationship with her employer.

Migrante-middle East firmly believes Clarissa's claim that she was raped. That's the reason we demanded that the Philippine Embassy hire a local lawyer for her defense. We found out later that the Embassy does not have an on-call local lawyer to provide legal assistance to OFWs in Saudi Arabia.

Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Esteban Conejos and the Philippine Embassy in Saudi Arabia missed our point—again. Clarissa would not have been convicted and imprisoned if she had not been denied the assistance of her being a victim of rape had been properly established during her trial with the help of a lawyer.

Providing OFWs with legal assistance is mandated by the Migrant Workers Act. The failure of the DFA and the Philippine Embassy to give Clarissa a lawyer was criminal neglect, plain and simple.

The Philippine embassy in Riyadh admitted in several occasions that it has no lawyer hired on a retainer's basis and that the luxury of "canvassing legal assistance is on "as the need arises" basis.

We are calling President Aquino to act, without any hesitation, keep DFA officials abroad who cannot provide OFWs in distress with the proper services and assistance they need.

If President Aquino is true to his word of reforming the inefficient bureaucracy, then he must sack inept government officials who cannot deliver the most basic services to the people, including OFWs and their families.

—ROBY GONZALES MONTEJO,
Migrante-Middle East regional coordinator,
migrantme@ymail.com

A challenge to Tulfo

I WOULD just like to make a comment on the Dec. 31, 2010 column of Ramon Tulfo, in which he described the acquittal of Hubert Webb and company as "like winning the grand lotto."

I think it's an insensitive and callous display of unprofessionalism.

I think no Filipino should celebrate in this case, considering that the perpetrators of the massacre are still free and that justice for Carmela, Jennifer, Estrellita and the Ravenhoods has not been rendered. In his haste, does Tulfo think that we would celebrate knowing that these murderers are still out there roaming free?

Since Tulfo has proven his point that the accused Webb and company were wrongly convicted and penalized, may I ask him to now focus his efforts on finding justice for the victims instead? He should join in chained his 20-year campaign proclaiming that Webb et al. did not commit the crime or finding innocent lone who murdered the Ravenhoods.

Tulfo's hands cry of "Despit ka Na!" Justifying the key Tulfo? (Are you being underworld? Can Tulfo do better?

"Sept si Carmela, Jennifer at Estrellita at napaumanhing nila ngayon sa yo, Mr. Tulfo. Ano po ang gagawin niyo?"

The Oct. Tulfo helps bring the murderers to court—would he die day that we will all find that we were in the grand hero.

I challenge Tulfo: Help Carmela, Jennifer and Estrellita, they also need you.

—CECILIA U. ACEBAR,
303 Road 6,
Tabon, Lo-Pilar City

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Baguio shivers; it's bad news for fish, veggies

By Reddish Mauile, Dilmar Carino and Yolanda Sonio
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—Baguio folk endured shivering in their blankets on Monday and Tuesday after the summer capital's temperature dropped to its lowest since the last week of December.

But that's not good news to fish growers, vegetable farmers and the elderly.

Records from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration's (Pagasa) Baguio office showed the temperature dropped to 10 degrees Celsius at 5 a.m. on Tuesday, which was lower than the 10 degrees Celsius recorded on Monday.

Daisup Gidali, Pagasa weather specialist, said the trend suggests a further temperature drop to 9 degrees Celsius.

The New Year's Day weekend recorded the sharp drop from 12.9 degrees Celsius on Saturday (Jan. 1) to 11 degrees Celsius on Sunday (Jan. 2), Gidali said.

Government doctors have started to prepare for the cold.

Dr. Florence Reyes, city health officer, said local clinics are advising neighborhoods to monitor their young and old household members, who are vulnerable to respiratory tract diseases like pneumonia.

Medical records suggest that the number of accidents who suffer coughs, colds and respiratory tract infections rises between December and February, she said.

"This is [seasonal]; so we urge the public to cover their mouths when they cough, to eat more vegetables and fruits to strengthen their immune system and to remove their jackets when they perspire to avoid pneumonia," she said.

Enrique (will) Bok-yeowa in Dagupan City and sold at the Baguio City public market many coats smaller and that's also due to the cold.

BAGUIO residents display their cold-weather headgear. (LYNDA SONIO / INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON)

Emma Molina, Dagupan agriculture officer, said fish mortalities is dictated by the weather, so lower temperatures make cultured fish eat less. It also affects the ability of fish to make up for the low nutrients, fish metabolize their fatty deposits for energy, as the fat fighting their stomachs become thinner, she said.

She said milkfish are useless bodies but they swim deeper when surface water is cold and will swim up for food only when the surface is warmer.

Local markets may also end up selling damaged salad vegetables, and this, too, can be blamed on low freezing temperatures.

Mary Bongsat Isaua, which supply Metro Manila's demand, are located in high altitudes, where temperatures are usually 2 to 3 degrees lower than Baguio City's temperature readings, said Lolita Bonsaw, Benguet agriculturist.

Lester Isaya-an, Benguet farmers' federation Inc. (BFFI) public relations officer, said anger (frost) occurs in the latter days of January and early February when temperature readings fall below 10 degrees Celsius.

Farmers expect the worst when the temperature drops to 10 degrees Celsius because succulent crops bring frost to upland vegetable gardens, he said.

When anger is likely, farmers usually hesitate from planting because frost "burns" new plants, he said. Bagsatan, a farmer from Barangay Betlli in Mankayan, Benguet, said farmers would also be forced to harvest their vegetables earlier because frost damages the leaves of full grown vegetables, reducing their value.

"The farmers would rely on their own understanding of the cold weather when they decide to plant or harvest outside their normal cropping calendars," he said.

Solons adopt code of conduct

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

THE HOUSE of Representatives has adopted a code of conduct in its amended parliamentary rules which explicitly bars members from accepting commissions from private businesses and participating in positions in government or in a quasi-official corporation.

This was the first time for the House to have adopted its own code of conduct, said House Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr.

Belmonte noted that from when as congressman beginning in 1992 and was House Speaker when he left in 2001, He was Quezon City mayor from 2004 to 2019.

The code mandates all members to "act at all times in a manner that shall reflect creditably on the House."

The first provision states that a House member may not receive compensation in take any interest "the receipt of which would occur by virtue of influence temporarily exercised" from his position.

A House member will forfeit his seat if he accepts appointment to any state-run corporation, including entities created by Congress during his term.

House members are also barred from appearing as legal counsel or take any financial interest in a contract or franchise or special privilege granted by the state during his term.

House members cannot have any interest in a private entity that would benefit from any law or resolution that they authored. They will be given 30 days from approval of the law or resolution to divest from such a deal.

House members are also required to follow a strict nondisclosure requirement of any classified information discussed in closed-door sessions or officially acted as part of their work.

The code is explicit in warning representatives against intervening "in any manner before any office of the government for personal pecuniary benefit or where the member may be called upon to act on account of the member's office."

It also warned members against authorizing individuals or groups to use the words "Congress of the Philippines," "House of Representatives," "Official Business," and the seal of the House on any letterhead or envelope.

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Noynoy backs Navy upgrade

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT Aquino yesterday promised to back the Philippine Navy's desperately needed modernization but also called on the group to continue serving the country's seas, particularly those that host ongoing petroleum exploration.

In his speech during the turnover of command from Rear Admiral Danilo Cortes to new Navy Flag Officer in Command (FOIC) Rear Admiral Alexander Pama, Mr. Aquino said those critical areas include the seas around Kalayaan Island Group, Malampaya, Palawan, Maqui and Iloilo.

"I salute you on the accomplishments of your duty to protect our territory despite such obstacles as antiquated vessels and the lack of some important equipment. Be assured that your government will also work double time to ensure the integrity of the Navy," President Aquino said.

"I am quite confident that while we strengthen your ranks and upgrade your equipment, you will continue to take care of the security of our seas, especially in the areas of petroleum exploration in the Kalayaan Island Group, Malampaya, Palawan, Maqui and Iloilo," he added.

President Aquino said the Navy's role in securing these areas is proof of its huge contribution not only to the country's economy aspect "but also in strengthening the potential of our national economy."

Before reading his prepared speech, Mr. Aquino turned spontaneous and said he was unpleasantly surprised when he learned that one of the two vessels tasked to patrol waters off Palawan was still missing on intelligence.

"In one of the briefings on the Kalayaan Island Group, I was shocked—I know that we have a diversity of ships—[but] I was surprised when I learned that of the two boats [in Palawan], one of them still had engines," President Aquino said.

President Aquino said the Navy does not lack lobbyists for funding for more modern ships and equipment.

He mentioned former Marine commandant and now Mountaineer Rep. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the House committee on national defense; Senior Navy officer Carlos Sen. Jun Ebdane, chair of the Senate committee on appropriations; and Marine Sanchez Vice President Jejomar Binay.

Days of overloaded trucks are numbered

By Philip C. Tubeza

TO HELP preserve the country's national roads, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) will hold next week a 40-day run of its campaign against overloaded trucks.

Public Works Secretary Rogelio Singson said that during the 40-day run of the anti-overloading operation, authorities will be weighing cargo trucks in 14 areas in Metro Manila starting Jan. 11.

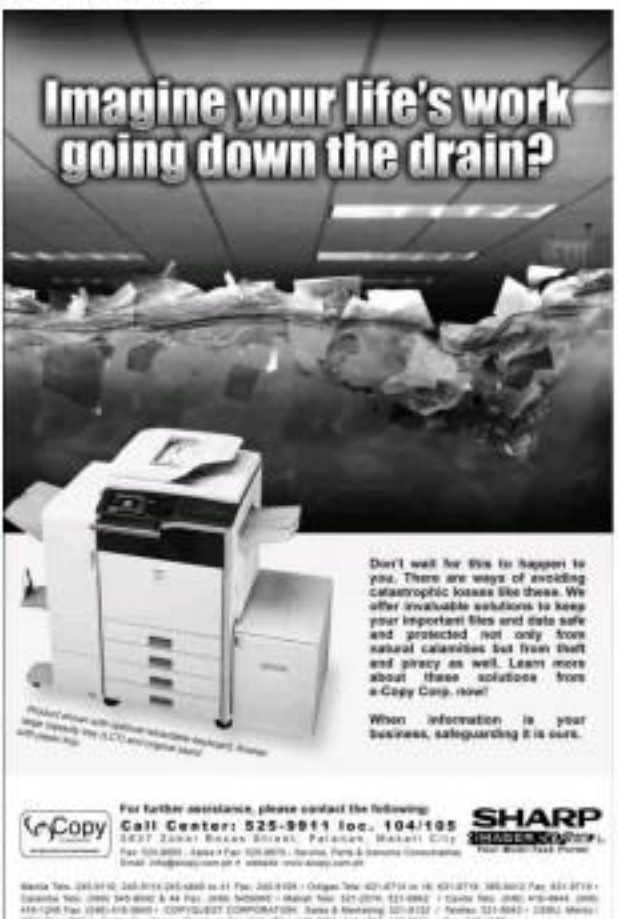
The campaign is part of the implementation of the Motor Vehicle User's Charge Law (MVUC), he said.

He said the department needs a budget of P40 billion to maintain and preserve a total of 30,000 kilometers of national roads.

In actuality, it only receives a P19-billion asset preservation fund through the collected charges under the MVUC, he said.

The areas where trucks will be weighed are: The Mariveles Gate, the Zaragoza Gate and Capaldag, near C-2 in North Harbor; 25th, 8th and 2nd Streets in South Harbor; the corner of MIA and Coastal roads in Parañaque;

Quirino Avenue in Las Piñas; Marcos South-Road Station in Muntinlupa; Sumulong and Marcos highways, Ortigas Extension; Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City; San Juan-Novaliches Road (Quirino Highway), Caloocan City; and the Macapagal Highway in Valenzuela.



Assistant Editor Tony Bengcoste

Across the NATION

Arrest of NPA rebel angers Dutertes

DAVAO CITY—The arrest of a New People's Army member on New Year's Day here has angered Mayor Inday Sara Duterte who, with her father, Vice Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, assured the safety of rebels in the city during the duration of a holiday truce between government and guerrillas.

Mayor Duterte said she was "very disappointed" with author[illegible] and wanted the arrested rebel released.

"They are doing what exactly is being used as propaganda against them," said the mayor, "because of what they did, the next the communist movement will persecute them."

"They don't learn from their mistakes," said the mayor. "They continually repeat their mistakes."

Police defense

Police in Southern Mindanao were quick to defend the arrest of 53-year-old Edwar Brigino, however.

Supt. Quevalin Mandeng, police regional spokesperson, said the arrest was made by agents of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and the Special Action Battalion.

Mandeng said Brigino was not arrested for being a guerrilla. "It is because he has standing arrest warrants."

"We understand the feelings of the mayor but authorities are only doing their jobs," said Mandeng.

He said Branch 6 of the regional trial court in Agusan del Sur issued arrest warrants against Brigino. One of the warrants was for alleged robbery and homicide and the other one was for double frustrated homicide.

Dawn arrest

Brigino, however, denied the allegations.

"All my life, I haven't been to Agusan. How can I commit a crime in a place that I have not been to in the first place?" the arrested rebel suspect said.

He was arrested at dawn of this 1 while a cluster meeting was being conducted.

Rigoberto Sanchez, spokesperson of the Davao Anti-Communist, said the arrest was a "blatant display of cruelty."

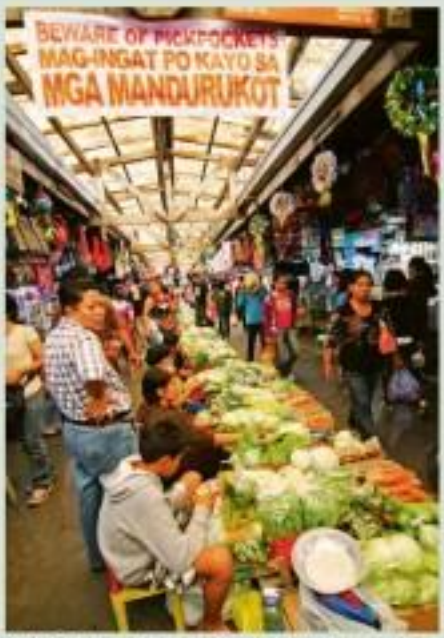
"It famously violated the self-declared truce," said Sanchez.

He said the arrest jeopardizes initiatives between the government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.

No surprise

In Negros Occidental, the Army expressed no surprise over an announcement made by communist guerrillas to recruit more fighters in Negros Occidental, saying it captured guerrilla leader and spiritual head of the terror group ahead of the announcement.

The Army said the plan to build more guerrilla fronts was already revealed to the military by a top NPA leader arrested in Bacolod City last year. Adjy. Lt. Nguyen Chan Rey, the 303rd division, said in a report by Carlos P. Conde, Inquirer Visayas



A WARNING against thieves at the Baguio City Public Market may as well be addressed to city authorities who are struggling to keep buses out the city but are diverted to the national government. EVARISTO DOMINGO/INQUIRER.NET

P-Noy visit to Baguio yields results for city's budget bid

BAGUIO CITY—President Aquino expressed willingness to change his initial stand P120-million budget allocation for removal from the 2013 budget law, after being told it would help the city government and the nation win a "historic decision" on the West Philippine Sea case.

Speaking at a flag ceremony, Domogan said Mr. Aquino told him on the 31 at City Hall to discuss a removal of the allocation representing Baguio's 40 percent share from revenue of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza).

Portion of the amount had been set aside to modernize the Athletic Bowl at Burnham Park, he said. Most of the shares may also be used to pay off debts to the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS).

The city government owes GSIS P114 million, including interest, for the purchase of the Baguio Convention Center in 2004.

Baguio was supposed to pay the P120-million purchase contract through its 25 percent share from rent paid by the SM Prime Holdings Inc.-owned SM City Baguio Development Corp.

Former GSIS president Winston Garcia had declared Baguio in default in March 2013. The city local finance board, however, negotiated more time to settle the debt. GSIS president Daniel Lacson then could reduce the debts to P80 million.

Domogan submitted to the mayor's office also documents another round of negotiations with the GSIS board to reduce the city's debts to another P10 million.

"Mr. Aquino I suggested the city government put down [their debts] in a letter," said Domogan. He said this would help the Department of Budget Supervision by the Department of Budget Management.

The allocation was among 17 items in the 2013 General Appropriations Act (GAA) that Mr. Aquino vetoed. This was the second time the amount was disapproved after former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo vetoed the item in the 2004 GAA.

Domogan said resuming the city's collectible was the solution now fueled in talks with the late Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin and Commission on Audit Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. who, the budget secretary said, backs the move.

"But now we realize that the shares were mistakenly requested to the national government," said Domogan at a Dec. 29 news conference.

Mr. Aquino, for No. 7918 (Special Economic Zone Act of 1995) acquired from Isnida Peza to pay taxes to their local governments, but collecting agencies remitted them to the national treasury.

Mr. Aquino spoke to Domogan shortly after meeting with Baguio Bishop Carlito Cenzon on Friday. The President spoke "private time" in the city from Dec. 30 to Jan. 2. Eleanor Ebdane, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Batangas PNP: Scrapping STL would beat 'bookies'

BATANGAS CITY—Police in Batangas are checking reports of farmers being duped by illegal small town Lottery (STL) operators but a regional official of the Philippine National Police in the province said scrapping STL altogether would help put a stop to the practice of so-called bookies.

Police in Lipa City and three [illegible] to recover farmed commodities from STL bettors who were unable to claim their prizes from STL during the Dec. 12, 2016 draw, which yielded a winning combination of 12-12.

Capt. George Rabilas, Lipa City police chief, said in a phone interview that they have heard of the allegation but believed the farmers fell victim to STL bookies, or STL chiefs, and not real STL operators and employees.

A 30-year-old woman from Barangay Bolbok in Lipa, who requested anonymity, said she won P2,000.00 for her P500 bet but was paid in installment of "three-five."

The woman said there are other winners of the Dec. 12 draw who have yet to receive the full amount of their prize after receiving initial payments from STL bookies.

A resort in Lipa City said it is possible the farmers were given their prizes because the "kubos" (bookie's collectors) pretend to be STL employees to collect bets.

Rabilas said that there were reports that STL bettors will stage a rally at the City Hall and STL personnel or the police were monitoring the situation.

The city police have arrested at least 56 collectors for bookies in 2016. They are now facing charges, according to Rabilas, who became city police chief in March 2016.

In Batangas province, records showed 30 persons were arrested with 26 illegal gambling cases filed in court against the bookies, said Batangas Acosta Bonquilla, provincial police information officer.

Arresting persons involved in STL bookies, however, is difficult, admitted Bonquilla.

He said some franchise holders of STL are themselves the ones running bookies and using STL identification cards for their collectors.

Whenever someone would get caught collecting for bookies, he would present an ID claiming that he really works for STL which is illegal, said Bonquilla.

"Which is why many similar cases get dismissed," he said.

To put an end to the bookies, he said the solution is to put a stop to STL in Batangas where the highest number of bookies is operating, he said.

Police in Laguna are also on the watch for the expansion of "jueteng" in the province from Metropolitan metal reports that a retired police officer, a resident of Binangonan, has been operating an illegal lotto activity and tripling the names of several mayors in Metro Manila. Manuel Erike Lasaba, Inquirer Southmetro

Woman leads 5 robbers in bank heist in Iloilo

By Nestor M. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—Robbers apparently led by a woman pulled off what could be this city's biggest bank heist, wounding a security officer as they took off with an undetermined amount of cash from the bank on a busy street here.

Police say two of the fleeing suspects, one of them a woman, subdued the Easy Trust Bank branch on Ramon Ledesma Street here past 4 p.m. on Monday.

Bank teller Karen Plot Balcorta, 22, who was shot and wounded by one of the robbers, was also held up.

Senior Supt. Modesto Valeriano, officer-in-charge of the Iloilo City Police Office, said the robbery captured in video by the bank's closed circuit television (CCTV) camera took five minutes and 46 seconds.

Valeria said the woman suspect was the first to reach the bank, pretending to be having a [illegible] time opening the bank's automated teller machine and asking a guard for help.

A guard, Leny Pedilco, came out past 4 p.m. and asked a passer-by who was off-duty Jimmy Lim, to help open the door.

Lim, a former security guard, a robber poked a gun at him. Shortly after, the four other suspects, including the woman, gained entry into the bank, wielding handguns and overpowering the guards.

Pedilco was forced to get his shotgun first it had no bullets.

Valeria quoted some bank employees as recalling the robbers saying repeatedly that they were only after the money as they wanted people inside the bank spared from any violence, sudden movements or raising alarm.

The robbers fled in a taxi with their loot. Bank officials refused to issue any statement.

Police said they would also look at a possible inside job. "It was so fast," said Valeria.

Police released a sketch of the woman who was described to be of medium build, age 25-30 years old and 5'3" tall.

Valeria said police would also check if the image of the woman was captured in video by the bank CCTV.

Mindanao kidnappings: 3 victims, including boy, remain in captivity

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Police continued to monitor communications between kidnappers and families of three victims that remain captive here, in Basilan and Pagadian City but couldn't launch rescue operations.

In Basilan, police said the family of Leny Ador Santos, a resort and restaurant owner in the province, received a [illegible] letter from him purportedly saying the captive businessman was still alive.

Chief Supt. Wilmarie Rhu, chief of the Directorate for Integrated Police Operation (Dipo) in Western Mindanao, said Dr. Leo Santos, apparently on orders by the captors, wrote a letter that his family received on Jan. 1, by courier service.

Rhu said the family had received the [illegible] letter on the following day.

The family of a 9-year-old boy who is still being kept captive in Pagadian City was not to recall [illegible] about the fate of the victim, however.

The Guzmans family said they were still awaiting word from the kidnappers on the fate of the 9-year-old boy who, along with his grandmother, was kidnapped in October.

The boy was snatched with his grandmother, Benita, from their home in Pagadian City on Oct. 10, 2016.

Naina had died in captivity another body was later [illegible] in a remote area of Sultan Naga Dimaporo in Lanao del Sur.

Leodegario Gaudi, Benita's brother, said the family has no updates on the whereabouts or condition of the boy.

"We are extremely worried over the fate of my grandson," he said.

He said police earlier learned that the kidnappers were demanding P10 million in ransom for the boy. There were no other piece of information on the boy, said Elsa.

Another family of a kidnapping victim, the Guanzons, reported receiving regular updates on Maria Chris Guanzon, 21, a nursing graduate, from her kidnappers, according to Elsa.

Maria Chris was kidnapped at her house in Mandimasal village in this city on Dec. 16, 2016.

Her grandfather, Jesus Sagadraca, was shot dead during the kidnapping.

Elsa said the Guanzons has [illegible] been updating the police on the captors' demands. Avila Mikpala, Inquirer Mindanao

INQUIRER Northern Luzon
Editor Juan Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

DEADLY CRASH Forty-two passengers were killed when their bus plunged into a ravine in Sablan, Benguet, in the deadliest road accident in northern Luzon in 2010.

BAYOUS HARVEST Farmers and fishermen in northern Luzon expect more support from government to boost Ilocos production.

POLL AUTOMATION The automated election in May 2010 required the government to test new poll machines in remote Kalinga town in Benguet.

From past lessons, a better year seen

By Inquirer Northern Luzon and Inquirer Central Luzon

THE YEAR 2010 saw the country undergo a major political change with the election of new leaders and endure both natural and manmade calamities.

But government and community leaders in northern and central Luzon want to move forward and see a better 2011 through the lessons they learned from the past year.

Victoria Garcia, governor of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) in Central Luzon, says that solid partnerships between local officials are most important in driving the economy forward.

"Confidence in President Aquino [has driven the private sector to participate and embark on programs that promote country's development through public-private partnership," she says.

The assumption of the May 2010 national elections, says Ramon Mejia, president Sarai Domingo, left many questions unanswered that argue against using the same precinct-based optical scanners (PCOS) in the next elections.

Ocampo, who ran for senator and lost, says the Commission on Elections should strive for more transparency.

He says the Aquino administration faces a big test on how it would go after corruption, plunder and human rights violations cases under the administration of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Governor Amado Espino III of Pangasinan says a better 2011 for Cagayan Valley as long as government leaders resolve to fight corruption and implement the law.

Maj. Gen. Gaudencio Pangilinan, commander of the 5th Infantry (Star) Division based in Tarlac, says the Armed Forces of the Philippines' focus in 2011 is not on combat operations but on seeds of communities.

Aurora Rep. Juan Edgardo Angara says the "continuing improvement of good, decisive and accountable leadership should be underscored."

"Also, I'm hopeful for better prospects ... in education, agriculture, tourism, and hopefully, so that government can provide jobs and improve the quality of life of Filipinos," he says.

Fight vs gambling

A Tarlac religious group lashed out in 2010 vow to stand their ground and serve notice in their "social retreats and covenant," says Bishop Marino Inopiquez, senior pastor of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines-Angeles. He cites the interfaith drive against all forms of gambling in the summer capital.

Retired Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz anticipates intensified gambling operations in 2011, but says his group, the Bro-sada ng Bayan Laban sa Sugal, is up to the challenge.

"Gambling, both legal and illegal, will be stronger by 2011 because, first, the Peso does has pronounced that [establishing] gaming was not his priority and second, he has put under his office the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office," he says.

"I think we are to for a big fight against gambling this 2011," Cruz says.

OUTLOOK

Better agri production

The PCCI's Garcia calls for the protection of farmers in Nueva Ecija, who have suffered from irregular importation of agricultural products, particularly onion.

Teodito Andres, provincial agriculturist, says the area to be planted to hybrid rice this year would decrease because the Department of Agriculture has switched over the subsidy intended to farmers.

"Many farmers are not keen on using hybrid rice seed because of its high price," he says.

Sablan Gov. Wilfredo Bryan Aberasturi says that with encouragement from the national government to look for another water source for Metro Manila other than the Angat Dam so the province's farmers, who depend on the dam for the irrigation supply of their farms, would not suffer.

Bacon Bar will give priority to efforts to boosting agriculture production through distribution of livestock and seedlings of high value crops, such as mango, dragon fruit, oats, onion and garlic to farmers.

The National Tobacco Administration has set aside P30 million to boost the province's tobacco industry.

Infra development

Ilocos Norte will step into 2011 with a fresh outlook amid new infrastructure development thrusts that will help generate local income and, in the process, redirect dependence on the national government.

Gov. Imee Marcos promises to bring the province back to business by introducing various investment and tourism projects to redirect income.

The fate of the Subic Bay Freeport, which has become a magnet for investments capital from all over the world in recent years, is weighing heavily on leaders who rely on the area's economic development.

Danny Pastor, Subic Bay Freeport Chamber of Commerce president, says the biggest problem is the absence of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) board. "If this problem [is] enough to 2011, it will hold off new investments," he says.

"Businesses generally make decisions based on calculated forecasts of the future. We don't like it when the government changes rules in the middle of the game. The year 2010 saw a number of game changers that are not necessarily good for business," he says.

Amelia Pineda, president of the Metro Olongapo Chamber of Commerce and Industries, says the expansion of the SBMA will play a crucial role in the new year.

Dagupan Mayor Benjamin Lim says enrollment of universities in the city has dropped so officials plan to air shows with colleges/universities to regain the city's reputation as an educational center in the north.

Water, garbage problems

In Baguio City, Mayor Mauricio Domogan has set aside cash to prepare for bad rap tourists or to pursue real estate in favor of solving the summer capital's power and water problem. More tourists won't matter, he says, "if we can't solve these properly."

Baguio, which boasts the highest rainfall in the country, ranks as its daily water supply for over 300,000 residents.

The city government had been focused on a garbage crisis from 2008 to 2010. It has bought 24 garbage trucks and a P50-million organic waste and raw sewage into powdered organic fertilizer. The machines are expected to start working this month.

In the Cordillera, elected officials and regional line agency directors opened the month with a planning workshops to make sure upland community projects get the attention of Malacañang, says Juan Ngalob, Cordillera director of the National Economic and Development Authority.

Making Ifugao Independent economic performances in 2009 and 2010, regional leaders are convinced the Cordillera needs a start up fund from the national government to improve roads and basic output, "because we cannot compete with other regions for a very small budget consensus argument," Ngalob says. Reporters Rolando Infolo, Cristina Arnaldo, Vincent Cabreza, Lucrecio Rellon Jr., Maurice Malanes, Villamor Visaya Jr., Rosette Ordoñez, Robert Ariñgo, Armand Galang, Analiza Bopaz, Carmela Reyes-Estrope and Greg Bañyacan

REGIONAL FRONT: Top 10 stories in 2010

RANCHER LANDS Drought consumed government resources in northern and central Luzon, when water levels in dams that supply households and farms began to drop in the first half of 2010. Isabela reported farm losses worth P1 million as early as February, while Ilocos Norte recorded losses worth P7 million in March. Cagayan lost P300 million worth of palay and corn.

POLL DEFEAT The May 10 elections saw Catholic priest Eddie Panlilio lose in his radio-free bid to former Board Member Lito Picardo, one of the candidates whom he defeated in the 2007 elections. In Isabela, Gov. Grace Padaca opted to win a third and final term, losing to former Rep. Faustino Dy III, a member of the Dy clan that she toppled in the 2004 gubernatorial elections.

EARLY ROOTS FOR PRESIDENT Sen. Benigno Simeon Cojuangco Aquino III, who served as representative of Tarlac, was elected 15th Philippine president. Aquino, 50, is the son of slain Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. and the late President Corazon Aquino. His parents were Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, did not retire from politics and ran and won in a town position, as representative of Pampanga's second district. Three other suitors of Central Luzon—former Sen. Richard Gordon of Bataan City, former Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro of Tarlac and incumbent Cebu Governor Gwendolyn Garcia—brought the presidency to May.

MEDIA WORKER SLAIN Joaquin Aquilo, correspondent of dxJC (Aksyon Radio) in Baras, Iloilo, was shot and killed on June 15, in Barangay Bailan in Lanag City on his way home to Baras from Tres City prosecutor, however, dismissed the murder charge against Baranz Vice Mayor Pacifico Velasco for insufficiency of evidence.

PERFIDACIA MURDERS The year of 2010 ended without the police solving the murder of Rose Tenangco, brother of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Gov. Armando Tetangco Jr., and his two companions on June 1 in Angeles City. The police, however, scored in another case when they arrested in San Fernando City in La Union the suspect in the July 22 slaying of a retired American serviceman. His wife and three others in Angeles City. Suspect Mark Ecoe was also suspected of burning a hotel in the environs of Ultima Anda Compound and their respective partners also in Angeles.

BENGUET ROAD TRAGEDY On Aug. 19, a La Mesa Diesel bus Alexbus plunged into a 150-foot deep ravine in Sablan, Benguet, killing 42 of its 60 passengers. The accident led the Department of Transportation and Communications to suspend the "hold" system, an illegal arrangement where a bus company allows private bus owners to operate using its franchise.

ABORTION SUPERTYPHOON Supertyphoon "Juan" struck northern Luzon on Oct. 18, destroying and damaging P11.6 billion worth of crops and infrastructure, and killing 12 people. The year's strongest typhoon devastated Isabela, killing over a dozen residents and damaging over 100,000 farms. Power supply was cut off and restored a three weeks. The typhoon also isolated three Isabela coastal towns, with help reaching residents there several days after it struck.

WOODSIDE DEEDS The incident broke a story on irregularities in a housing project in Pampanga, involving the Home Development Mutual Fund's Pag-ibig Funds to make public the results of its investigations on the projects of Gimbo Arambusa Realty-Ambiligan Corp. in the province. It canceled the company's collection servicing agreement and said Globe Asiatique president Emilio Lee and other company officials and employees for syndicated estafa. A Senate investigation revealed further irregularities in the system of housing loan provisions from Pag-ibig Fund.

FUNERARIA HOTEL BLAZE Twelve days before the new year, a fire in a hotel in Tuguegarao City killed 16 people, 10 of them nursing graduates from Isabela who were scheduled to take the licensure examination on Dec. 16, the day the fire broke out.

EXPECTING MORE With the economy recovering in 2010 from the previous year's slump, Central Luzon expects the positive development to continue in 2011. Investor confidence is high in the region brought about by the high level of trust in President Aquino. Confidence and the rest of Northern Luzon expect slight improvements in the new year owing mainly to unfulfilled public-private sector pledge to resolve mountain roads devastated by landslides that were triggered by typhoons in 2009. Increased output in some industries and agriculture in the two regions in late 2010, however, promises to brighten the outlook for 2011.

FURY OF "JUAN" A truck rushes along an empty highway in Ilagan, Isabela, to deliver rice, a precious commodity for residents displaced by Supertyphoon "Juan."

SURF CAPITAL Tourism-certified Isabella has disasters. Supertyphoon "Juan" brought huge waves that made surfing in San Juan, La Union, untenable.

VEGGIE TRADE Benguet's vegetable industry looks forward to a better year with the restoration of typhoon-damaged roads.

Editor Teddyboy B. Molavedres
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Chiong
SPORTS

TNT, San Mig loom large as semis unfold

By Marvin B. Carcillo

TNT 76 SUIT and San Miguel Beer, squarely tandem at the top of pre-Commissioner Happy Wheel bracket that top with respective classification phase tilts, tackle separate foes today as they try to move a step closer toward a projected title clash in the PBA Philippine Cup.

The Tropang Texters gun for a 2-0 lead against defending champion Derby Ace Llamados, while the Beermen spar their separation loss of seven semifinal series against dangerous sister squad Barangay Ginebra Kings at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

Talk 'N Text takes the floor first at 5 p.m., hoping to follow up its brilliant 96-80 Game 1 victory and put more distance on the upstart Barangay Ginebra.

San Miguel, with rookie coach Ato Agustin nudging the Beermen into a cohesive unit, drops it out with the crowd darling Gin Kings in the 7:30 p.m. contest.

Besides last to two elimination-round games to the Beermen by a combined total of two points, it had a shot at winning both games with dying second possessions only for fevered teams to frustrate Willie Miller each time.

And that's why it would be interesting to see how Miller atones for those failures.

Coach Jong Uichico of Texters has not given any pre-series predictions, only a wish that the series will go to a deciding Game 7.

"We can get lucky in one game," Uichico said after the underdog Kings rallied from as many as 26 points down to beat the Aces, 99-91, in their quarterfinal rubber match.

"If we can get it to a seventh game, then we will have a 50-50 chance (of winning)."

Mark Caguioa is back to the grouse, Ronald Tubid has sustained his form, and Rudy Hatfield has been the biggest big man in the playoffs for the Kings, who played without Eric Menk for the majority of the tournament.

Menk, also a former MVP, is expected to suit up today like Arqiuy Rosales and give Uichico the lift against a San Miguel side that is teeming with talent in all positions.

Danidin Hontiveros and Jay Washington, as well as Alex Cabagnot, will be the main cogs for the Beermen, who will have such seasoned players as Danny Ildefonso, Danny Seigle and Dorian Peña on warning off the bench.

James Yap, meanwhile, is expected to again lead the Llamados like he did with a night high 26 points in closing Game 1 effort.

And Yeap' flip could provide the defensive pressure on Jimmy Alapag, who notched the Llamados in the endgame of their series opener.

VETERAN Danny Seigle (front) provides a strong, calming presence for San Miguel coming off the bench.

D-League fills up slack left by PBL hibernation

By Jasmine W. Payo

SALUD

THE VOID left by the indefinite absence of the Philippine Basketball League has prompted the pro league to push for the formation of the Developmental League (D-League) by next month.

PBA commissioner Chito Salud said the proposed to form the league, patterned after its NBA counterpart is supposed to "be given the dominance" during the team owners' meeting on Jan. 25.

"The PBL has been fully supported by the PBA over the years and it is just so unfortunate that the PBL might not be able to take off this year," Salud said at the PBA Forum yesterday at Shakey's EDSA Avenue.

"I hope it's not a permanent situation, but the PBA cannot be caught napping."

The last PBL conference was held in March last year.

Salud said the PBA plans to open the D-League to players 17 to 26 years old, including foreigners with Filipino roots.

"Anyone who joins the D-League must play for two years before joining the PBA," said Salud in the session sponsored by Hapee, Shakey's and Ovaltine Battery.

"If you're a (foreigner) with Filipino roots, it's also your chance to show bona fide the country and disprove the impression that most Filipino players come to Manila just for the work."

At least three companies—San Miguel Beer, Ginebra and Hapee Mail—are interested in joining the D-League, which is also open to other ballclubs outside the PBA.

"We're looking at having at least six teams for the inaugural run but, ideally we want eight teams," said PBA operations and technical chief Richie Ticzon.

"We've already drafted a format that will run for three months. If it will take more time for the league to be formalized, we'll start by mid-March and have a total pan better the scheduled season commence their next season."

Added Salud: "The launch of governors feels strongly that there should be an intermediate league; a launching pad where our young players can develop mentally and physically before they join the pro leagues."

Salud also discussed the PBA's plans for a referees academy in national team commitments, and efforts to build in-court cohesion.

Patriots' bad form vs Slammers nettles Mikee

By Jasmine W. Payo

BOMBOY

THE RECENT woeful run of the Ambala Philippine Patriots has prompted team owner Mikee Romero yesterday to question his team's composure.

"We still retain our championship if we continue to play this kind of basketball," said Romero, the Hadronic Centro cup honcho who re-enters the team with businessman Stanley Ceñaviejo.

"This is not an ordinary tournament because the country's honor is at stake. They have to play with lots of passion and pride if we have to keep the crown."

The Patriots dropped four of their last six games, the last a double-overtime setback against the Chong Thailand Slammers, 79-83, in Bangkok last Sunday.

"I don't want to question their heart, but the way they played the last time, it seems they lack the character that I want," said Romero.

Only veteran guard Egay Silliores had an impressive outing among the locals with a game-high 27 points against the Slammers.

The Patriots' imports posted double-double numbers with Gabe Freeman delivering 28 points and 16 rebounds and Steve Thomas chipping in with 19 points and 22 boards.

With the loss, the defending champion Patriots fell two games behind the league-leading Slammers at 6-5.

The Slammers have second homecourt advantage in the semifinals.

"I don't mind if coach Louie (Alas) will just use six to seven players as long they will play at half so they can for the rest of the season," said Romero. "There's no I reason to play that poor."

NSAs have 1 month to present programs

By Jure Navarro

THE PHILIPPINE Sports Commission has given all national sports associations a month to submit their respective programs for the year and the budget they require for them.

PSC commissioner Dave Lozanta said the SNAs should be ready to present a bird's-eye view of their proposals when sports agency officials meet with association heads early next week.

"We'll address them if the PSC's objectives for 2011 and we will ask for their programs," said Lozanta.

The SNAs were told to submit a calendar of tournaments for their athletes and the budget needed to handroll the year-long program.

"There's a strict timetable for this and it should be done before the end of the month," said Lozanta.

But he said not all proposals will get financial support from the government sports agency.

"It's guaranteed money," Lozanta said. "And we want to make it clear that the PSC will only finance those tournaments that are considered 'must' funding."

PSC chair Ritchie Garcia earlier said that the agency had turned down proposals from two SNAs.

"The requests were unreasonable...so we told them to submit a more feasible proposal," said Garcia, who declined to identify the SNAs.

The year's PSC allocation for the SNAs, meant for the training expenses and international exposures of the athletes vying actions in this year's southeast Asian Games in Indonesia, will come from the national sports development fund.

The PSC raises part of this fund from the P40 million it receives monthly from the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.

NBA star Yao Ming (left) and the Taskers could meet again in Asia's Olympic qualifier if the PBA are is picked again to endorse a Smart Gilas

Smart Gilas seeks PBA stint

By Jure Navarro

THE SMART Gilas national team is eyeing the PBA Commissioner's Cup as training ground for the Philippines' Olympic campaign.

Smart Gilas manager Pembie Lim yesterday said the plan to pit the 10 five with the 10 PBA holdfolds intends to hone the Nationals' skills further and keep them in competitive shape.

"It will be good for the national team," said Lim. "They (PBA officials) are already aware of our intentions to join."

The import-flavored tournament is scheduled to start in late February.

Smart Gilas played in the Philippine Cup in 2009 as part of the team's preparation for the 2010 Fiba Asia Champions Cup and the Asian Games held two months ago in Guangzhou, China, where the Nationals finished sixth.

This time, Smart Gilas wants to forfeit the Commissioner's Cup in its training schedule for the Fiba Asia Championships in China, on Sept. 15 to 25. The tournament is the team's qualifier for the 2012 London Olympics.

Smart Gilas will also see action in the Dubai International Tournament on Jan. 28 to 29, the Fiba Asia Champions Cup in May and the Jones Cup in Taipei in August.

Prior to the Commissioner's Cup, the national squad will stay in Belgrade for a week-long scrimmage against Serbian pro ballclubs.

Meanwhile, Smart Gilas coach Rajko Toroman said it that 13 Marcos Douthit will rejoin the team today after a two-month vacation in the United States. The American is still waiting for the approval of his Filipino citizenship.

PCSO int'l junior golf fires off at Greenfield

THE NUMBEGA FLAMBOYED 11th PCSO Philippine International Junior Golf Championships tees off today at the Alpha Greenfield Golf and Leisure Club in Calamba, Laguna.

Coach Aimee players from Chinese Taipei, China, Hong Kong, United States, Hong Kong Malaysia, Indonesia and South Korea will pit their skills against local stars Julius Carlos, Gino dela Paz, Princess Espanol, Ali Romero, Angelo de Villa and Andrea Ebuen.

The 48 foreigners who arrived Monday are all billeted at the Carmona Sports Center in Tagaig City.

The tournament, sponsored by the Philippine Country Emerging Golfers Office and with Alaminos Hotel water as official drinking water, is organized by the Philippine Junior Golf Foundation headed by Edgardo "Tito Boy" Cornejo.

"Junior golf is not just a sport, it's also a family affair that is meant to be enjoyed," said Cornejo, who expressed over the official welcome rites yesterday.

BEN HUMBER

Asian football follows Fifa lead, recognizes Araneta

By Cesar P. Tupaz

ADHERING TO the decision of the International Football Federation (Fifa), the Asian Football Confederation has also recognized Mariano "Nonong" Araneta as president of the Philippine Football Federation.

At first there AFC president Mohamed Bin Hammam has declared his support for Araneta, who replaced Jose Mari Martinez, the former president who was removed two allegations of funds misuse and falsification of public documents.

Araneta is in Doha, Qatar to attend the AFC Congress on Thursday. He will cast the Philippines' vote in the election, where Bin Hammam is running unopposed.

Bin Hammam, who had initially opposed Fifa's recognition of Araneta, told Martinez in a letter that, as far as the AFC is concerned, the PFF leadership issue is closed case.

The AFC supremo's statement of support came on the same day the Fifa affirmed its decision recognizing Araneta after the joint Fifa-AFC team tasked to look into the case confirmed earlier findings that the removal of Martinez and the election of Araneta were done down board.

The Fifa-AFC investigators visited Manila last week to conduct interviews and to check the authenticity of documents submitted by the PFF in relation to its congress last November, when Martinez was ousted by 26 of 33 football association presidents and Araneta was unanimously voted to finish his term.

The general secretary Jerome Valdez in a letter to the PFF dated Jan. 3, said the acceptance of Fifa association committee chair Geoff Thompson that the election of Araneta was in line with the relevant PFF statutes still stands.

Love thy dog NO Doggie Odor Just bathe them every 4 days. Pets love it when you love them. PET SOCIETY Herbal Soap...

'Pacman fooled around with WBC'

By Ronnie Nathaniel

MANNY PACQUIAO: Could I pretend that Jose Sulaimon is that for the duration of pound-for-pound king Manny Pacquiao to defend his WBO welterweight title against Shane Mosley at the MGM Grand in Mac.

The 32-year-old Sulaimon learned that Pacquiao-Mosley had been finalized on the same day that the premier world professional boxing organization named Pacquiao its "Fighter of the Decade."

Apparently, Sulaimon feels that Pacquiao should have defended his WBC super welterweight title instead.

In an overseas telephone interview from his home in Mexico, Sulaimon said Pacquiao and his people "were fooling around with the WBC and the others," in their choice of Mosley.

Sulaimon stressed: "He (Pacquiao) is the best and I like him very much (but) he is not giving any respect to the WBC and myself at all. He has never answered anything from me or the WBC."

Pacquiao dominated Sulaimon like guests in their showdown for the vacant WBC 140-pound title on Nov. 13 in Arlington, Texas. The Filipino ring icon won the WBO welterweight belt after a TKO of Miguel Cotto in 2009.

Sulaimon said "at this time of his (Pacquiao) life he doesn't care about anything, he only cares about making money (again)."

Sulaimon, head of the WBC since 1975, said that if Pacquiao doesn't "respect the WBC rules then we have to do something about it" although he reiterated "it would make us very unpopular."

Sulaimon did see relevance on the statement.

Sulaimon blasted the choice of Mosley, saying "he is completely over the hill. He looked very, very bad and very slow in his last fight against a Sam (Sergio) Hasi."

Meanwhile, Mosley told Filipino fight fans that somebody is going to get knocked out in his showdown with Pacquiao.

Mosley, in an interview with a television sports show said, "With the way we (will) fight somebody's going to get knocked out. That's the beauty of the whole thing."

People will come to see somebody get hurt. The 30-year-old Mosley, who is coming off a knockout draw against Sergio Mora after losing badly to Floyd Mayweather Jr., said his opponent is now fascinated with the way Pacquiao fights. I'm exciting, he's exciting. It's going to be the fight of the year for 2011. I'm going to go with what Pacquiao said. He thinks I can pull the trigger to (not) keep it at that."

MOSLEY

Cyna faces tougher PH Ladies golf field

A STRONG foreign counterpoint and a tough local cast make up the field for the Philippine Ladies amateur golf Championship on Jan. 13 to 14 at The Country Club in Laguna.

Cyna Rodriguez will defend the title she won over KCSP teammate Lorelynn Enriquez for a record-setting score in the Manila Southwoods, but she is not expected to come so easily this time around.

The US-based defending champion, who plays for University of South California in the US, will face stiff opposition from the likes of Malaysian Amateur Open champion Diana Thian. Thai pro Supapan Kanlapichan, veteran intercollegiate Sea Chanchai Patit of Indonesia, defending Japan Ladies titlist Ai Jigota and Korean match play champ Sun Hwa Park. Brown U Brit Ai Li Soong and Jillian Ho.

Twelve other Filipinas are two more Brunei, four Taiwanese, two Chinese and four other Thais are also slated in the 54-hole tournament organized and conducted by Women's Golf Association of the Philippines.

Rodriguez and Enriquez lead a local cast that includes fellow KCSP students Doris Ordoñez, Mia Pecio and Chihiro Ikeda, who is also out to reclaim the title she won in 2009.

Irina Lubasa, the talented Cebu-based lass who beat Enriquez in a match play for the Philippine Amateur crown in Del Monte last year, is also in the fold, along with former champion Jayvie Agojo and youngsters Andrea Eusoy, Princess Espanol, Ms. Andrea Lagunzad and Daniela Uy.

That event also features the leading player of the various golf clubs in the country including Hans Destajo, Rhett Ralph Refuge, Southwoods; Jeffrey Gelli, Orchard, Riviera, Tagaytay Highlands; Alex Vitus, Bonn Pacific; Pocholo de Ocampo, Del Monte, Hervy and Southwoods.

Also on tap are the Class A and Class B events, the composition of which will be known after 36 holes.

For details, call 09178899240 or log on to wgapgolf.com or e-mail wgap@1globe.net.com.

'Heatles' turn back Bobcats behind James, Wade

MIAMI Heat's LeBron James (left) soars for a dunk against Charlotte Bobcats guard Shaun Livingston.

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina—LeBron James scored 28 points and Dwyane Wade added 24 to power Miami past Charlotte 99-92 on Monday, giving the Heat their 11th NBA road victory in a row.

James made 11-of-20 shots from the field and grabbed nine rebounds while Wade hit 12-of-20 shots and added 11 rebounds as the Heat improved to 27-9 with their 18th victory in the past 19 games.

Before a pro-Miami crowd in Charlotte, James and the Heat still threw when "the Heatles" (version of the star powers' of James, Wade and Chris Bosh and the huge crowds they attract around the league.

"The Heatles—off of the Beatles," James said. "Every time we take our show on the road, we bring a good crowd out."

After a disappointing 9-6 start, the superstar trio has come together to become the top seeds in the Eastern Conference.

Miami improved to 20-2 on the road, which is the best record in the NBA. The Heat have won 11 straight road games, their longest streak since winning 12 straight in 2006-07.

Charlotte missed 16 shots in a row over the second and third quarters and struggled without injured forward Gerald Wallace, center Nazr Mohammed and big man Tyrus Thomas.

Monday as has for the season with an Achilles tendon injury.

James scored 26 points in the second half, sinking four shots in a row to give Miami a 78-69 lead entering the fourth quarter.

"We're having a blast," James said. AP

SPORTSWATCH

Pasay derby slated

PASAY CITY Cockpit welcomes 2011 with series No. 1 of Pasay Derby Invitational Derby Cock-4-Cock Derby" slated on Jan. 7.

P15 gamefowls (10 this from and Rodney Dunes and participants must submit their entries early tomorrow.

Weigh-in is on Jan. 6 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and cock-on-Derby said that this year's guaranteed prize may reach to P400,000.

PCAP series up tomorrow

THE FIRST leg of Pasay Cockers Association of the Philippines's Cock Derby series gets going tomorrow at PCI Leasing and Development Center in Makati City.

PCAP organizer's announced by Saul Dan by birds to qualify early bird to the 2011 Cockers of the Year race.

Entries deadline will be staged from January to July 2011 each are monthly to determine the PCAP Cockers of the Year.

By TOP CHOICE
At Santa Ana Park

Coseteng blasts Joseph's 'sabotage'

IN HUDDLE
Mark Cuña

LYDIA LEE Pasa president Rich Joseph has found his match in former boss Nikki Coseteng.

Nikki, who vacated the seven Pasay and Unity Team with former Asia Games swimmer Simon Pipo, sharply criticized the Philippine Sports Commission and Joseph, whom she described as "a man of friendship a lifelong, betrayal of developing the sport of swimming."

She referred to the Rizal and Unity Games which drew only 6,000 participants but lashed the support of several Pasa swimmers who refused to break the Unitarian world record of 5,024 established Sunday last July 2010.

"Mommy Pura swimmers are to participate in the event or else they would be suspended was tantamount to sabotage of a national activity endorsed by President Aquino."

Although Joseph later released the postponement, Nikki said the Pasa head scheduled two important competitions on the day of the Unity Swim, effectively preventing the participation of the Pasa swimmers.

"Joseph said Pasa members can participate in another event under the principle of unauthorized violation, ship' espoused by the International swimming federation or else," Nikki said.

"Under this strange concept, Pasa swimmers cannot join non-Pasa competitions, and non-Pasa swimmers cannot become national swimmers in their hometown for the national meets in Filipino regardless of affiliation.

"Sayang."

In addition to PLDT head honcho Manny V. Pangilinan, who had sponsored for the team owners' meeting, I know of at least two other PBA franchise holders who are eagerly waiting for the ban to be lifted so that they can also field in the Commissioner Chito Salud.

Meralco president and CEO Wilfred Steven Enriquez said he has long thought that a team could be fielded, but he has never materialized.

While the weekend team and the proposed PBA offseason are usually celebrate to be discussed during the meeting, Steel admitted he is unaware of the other items on the agenda.

"For me, the adherence to the rules and regulations must first needs to be tackled. Then maybe it's time to reevaluate our vision for the league. The matter of cashier rule changes should also be considered two years the division," said Steel, who last attended a team owners' meeting "so looong ago."

Sole or Alaska team owner Raymond Sy, who like Steel Uytengsu watches all his subsidiary games as passionately as when his company first joined the league, is also looking forward to the Chit Filipino meeting.

"I hope the issue of parity will be discussed," Enriquez said, echoing even the league's unequal few fixtures.

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SUBIC RUN: A young runner makes his way to the crowd-lined finish during last year's Subic International Marathon. The third edition of the run gets going Jan. 9 at the Ocean Park in Subic Bay, where runners of all shapes and sizes are invited to join. The event has at its theme "Run For Fun and Transformation."

Ford eyes another 1-2-3 finish

THE FORD Focus-TRI Racing Team gunning for the overall crown in the third and final leg of the Philippine Production Car Championship slated Jan. 8 to 9 at the Clark International Speedway in Angeles City.

Aiming to raise the year with a bang, the team will be fielding an all-star to complete the title-clinching salvo.

The Ford Focus-TRI Racing Team currently holds the top three positions in the points ladder and will be looking to Marcus Wong, Jason Perkpark, Alvin Ng, Ryan Dagondon, Robbie Henrique and Stranger Calderon to deliver the finishing touches as to spoil for the plum.

Last year, the team bagged the drawlight series 1-2-3 finish in the GT 125 series behind Ben Pedpath, Eng Dizon and Singaporean Marcus Wong.

Pedpath and Dizon are aiming for a repeat as they currently hold the first and third positions in the overall standing of Philippine Production Car Championship.

They look forward to another successful race in the last three races together with Top Driver Challenge runner Alvin Ng who raked fourth in the last leg.

For details, e-mail info@teamracing.com or visit http://www.teamracing.com or call 0917-5579.

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DID YOU KNOW

SAMMIL "Tank" Davila, hailed as one of the greatest fighters to ever come out of the Asia-Pacific region, was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 1995.

Zaldy Dandan, Inquirer Research

Fetus found inside toilet of aircraft

Cops looking for clues to mother's identity

By Mike Navalo

A MAINTENANCE worker found a fetus in the toilet of an Etihad Airways plane which arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) from Abu Dhabi on Monday night.

Supt. Manuel Pinedo, deputy chief of the Police Center for Aviation Security (PCAS), said Randy Ordo, a maintenance man, was cleaning a toilet in the aircraft when he saw discoloration in a trash can.

A closer check of the can's contents led to the discovery of the fetus. Pinedo said Ordo immediately called the attention of the airline's duty manager and brought his find to the airport medical office.

A doctor at the clinic said the fetus was male and around five to six months.

PCAS investigator PO2 Rodolfo Pitaney told the Inquirer that they were waiting for a statement from Etihad managers to help them in their investigation.

According to him, he already had a copy of the list of passengers of Etihad Airways flight number EY 420 which landed in Manila at 9:55 p.m. on Monday.

He added, however, that it would be hard to determine the mother of the unborn child since there were around 300 passengers on the aircraft, including several Filipinos.

Pitaney said they had named the case over to the Pasay police.

In September, a newborn baby boy was found alive in the trash bin of a mall in Pasay and turned over to the care of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Charges filed against cop accused of rape, robbery

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A HOUSEMAID accused by a 20-year-old vendor of robbing and raping her inside the Manila Police District (MPD) headquarters on United Nations Avenue was formally charged yesterday before the city prosecutor's office.

The charges were filed by the MPD Women's and Children's Concerns Desk against PO3 Antonio Bautista Jr., 39, who is assigned with the MPD District Intelligence Division (DID).

Before the filing of the charges, investigators made sure that they were going after the right man after they discovered that there were two Police Officers 3 with the same Antonio Bautista assigned to the MPD.

The other Bautista, who used to be with the district's Anticrime Police Community

(MANILA, P.2)

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MMDA resumes drive against sidewalk vendors

By Tina G. Santos

MEMBERS who were allowed by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) to sell their wares on sidewalks during the holiday season should pack up and clean out by they must to avoid arrest.

The MMDA has recently resumed its sidewalk clearing operations in the metropolis, initially driving away more than 750 vendors who were obstructing traffic flow.

On orders of MMDA Chair Francis Tolentino, Undersecretary Abel Cabuella led a team of the agency's personnel in clearing the sidewalks of Bonifacio Shrine in Edsa, Quezon City, and the Edsa-Taft area in Pasay City during simultaneous operations on Wednesday.

According to Tolentino, the vendors had been given more than enough time to earn a living during the moratorium on sidewalk clearing operations which lasted on Jan. 2.

"The moratorium is not to vendors. They were here to go," he said.

But unlike in the past, Tolentino said MMDA personnel did not encounter resistance from vendors who had their operations.

He added that the vendors and the local government units (LGUs) had been given prior notice, near to the agency's advocacy of "direction with compassion" in dealing with the sidewalk vendors.

"We are grateful to the LGUs for supporting us in this campaign. This only goes to show that violence and antagonism in citizens can be prevented if all the concerned sectors are working together," Tolentino said.

The MMDA also angered Tolentino that the city government of Parañaque ordered the MMDA to postpone the clearing operations in the area until Jan. 7.

Tolentino said he hoped to champion the sidewalk clearing operations to the announced LGUs, instead of the MMDA.

This week, the MMDA will be conducting similar clearing operations on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City, particularly in problematic footbridges occupied by illegal vendors.

According to the MMDA chair, the reconstituted sidewalk clearing operation of the MMDA is conducted from three phases. Pre-clearing, termed still the pasi-clearing. The first phase involves consultations and dialogue with vendors and concerned LGUs and other sectors.

The second phase is the actual clearing while the third phase is the deployment of adversary personnel to the cleared areas to deter vendors from returning.

QC police official, 5 men relieved over kidnap charge

By Nancy C. Carvajal

THE HEAD of the sandwagan unit of the Quezon City Police District (QCPD) and five of his men have been directed and relieved for allegedly acting to kidnap an Indian man in Pasay City last month.

"I have ordered their relief and instructed them to submit to (an) investigation," QCPD director Chief Supt. Reynaldo Mariñas said, referring to Chief Insp. Edwin Peralta, chief of the QCPD Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Group (AIDSOTG), and five other policemen.

"We are conducting an investigation and if they will be found guilty, they will be administratively charged," he added.

According to Mariñas, Bayliss denied the accusation that he and his men were involved in the attempt to kidnap James Thomas.

Peralta claimed that on the day she supposed kidnap try took place, he said he and seven involved in another operation although he himself did not take part in it because he attended the QCPD Christmas party at Camp Karingal.

He added that the operation was legitimate and had been properly coordinated with the Southern Police District Special Operation Unit and the area previous commanders.

Earlier news reports said that the victim tagged Peralta as one of the men who tried to abduct him.

Senior Insp. Romeo Hio, QCPD chief for operations, said the accused policemen had submitted their statements and had undergone paraffin test.

Hio added that the policemen's firearms were also being examined at the Crime Laboratory.

San Juan barangay gets Jan. 25 relocation deadline

By Nina Calleja

SOME 105 families of the 1,000 others living on the river channel side of the new San Juan City Hall have been given until Jan. 25 to leave the area and move into a Laguna resettlement project.

Mayor Guia Gomez gave the deadline to give the evictees enough time to relocate before local officials begin demolishing their homes, said Gove Cedric Perdiones, city public information chief.

Gomez and her son, Rep. JV Ejercito, called for a dialogue on Dec. 28 and 29 last year to discuss relocation options with residents of Barangay Corazon de Jesus who will be affected by the ongoing construction of a much bigger San Juan City Hall.

The new structure will replace the century-old town hall located on N. Domingo Street.

"We clarified the reasons why they needed to evacuate, that and foremost, we explained that the site where their built their houses is the site of a national status and thus a property of the government," Perdiones said.

Perdiones said there were no other available options for the residents but to relocate since the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals had already ruled that the site belongs to the government.

Fifty-five houses, each measuring 21.2 square meters, located in Calauan, Laguna province are ready for occupancy, she added.

Only 30 families were named beneficiaries based on the 2008 census, but the city government had asked the Bahagi Housing Authority to provide the rest with relocation options as well.

"We gave them transportation and other financial assistance to move should we have a problem," said Perdiones.

Residents had claimed that two former presidents had proclaimed the site as right fully theirs.

2 brothers on Caloocan's most wanted list nabbed

By Kristine Felissa Mangunay

TWO BROTHERS on the list of Caloocan City's most wanted men were killed in a shootout with police the other day.

Ranchero Ordinario Romero, 30, alias Nilly, and Jaikapin Ramos, 32, of Evergreen Village in Barangay 168 opted to shoot it out with lawmen closing in on them during a clandestine session in a relative's house in Dagupan, also in Caloocan City.

In the ensuing gunfight, the notorious brothers sustained multiple gunshot wounds and were rushed to nearby Dalandan General Hospital, where they were declared dead on arrival.

Senior Insp. Jude Santos, city police chief, said the two brothers were facing a string of cases, including car theft, robbery and holding, robbery with multiple homicide, homicide and robbery with homicide.

Long the object of a police manhunt, the brothers were tracked down by law enforcers who went out to serve warrants for their arrest issued by Judge Athanasius Angeles of Branch 121 of the Caloocan Regional Trial Court.

Authorities recovered a .45 cal. pistol and two stolen motorcycles from the pair.

HOT MEAT

3 face raps for killing pigs, 'botcha' sale in marts

By Julie Pi-Aurelio

THE OWNER of a boiler store in Cubao, Quezon City and two others are now facing charges for allegedly slaughtering sick pigs and selling the hot meat popularly called botcha in the markets.

On Feb. 26, Mario Cabel, city veterinarian, filed a complaint against Dioner Bartino, owner of Cris Native Lechon; Ang dealer Jayme Bunoa and his employee Al Angel Magcos, for violating the Meat Inspection Code of the Philippines and the Consumer Act of the Philippines.

All three are at large.

The affidavit was filed in the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office on Monday, records showed.

Cabel filed the charges after his team caught the suspects in the act of slaughtering the meat which is unfit for human consumption.

Inspection

In a sworn statement, Cabel said the said his team of meat inspectors conducted an inspection at the Nilo Native Lechon on M. Domingo corner B Banlat Streets in Cubao on Dec. 29 last year at around 5 a.m.

The team was checking the store's ledger for sale when they noticed that some of the employees were slaughtering several pigs in violation of the law.

Upon investigation, the veterinarian noticed that the cut pork pieces were botcha meat intended to be sold to unsuspecting buyers.

The inspectors confiscated 20 bag heads of pigs weighed from 200 to 300 kilos.

Escape

Cabel claimed that when they tried to take Bartino into custody for questioning, the owner attempted to break free, and fled to safety.

An investigation showed that it was Magcos and Bunoa who transported the hot meat, Cabel added.

The logs and the hot meat were confiscated by the help of the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation Unit.

Town returns

The city official said she served a meat inspection order to Bartino, but when her team returned to the store the following day she caught the suspects in the act of slaughtering more pigs.

Upon interrogation, the veterinarian noticed that the cut pork pieces were botcha meat intended to be sold to unsuspecting buyers.

The inspectors confiscated 20 bag heads of pigs weighed from 200 to 300 kilos.

Escape

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The logs and the hot meat were confiscated by the help of the Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation Unit.

METROBRIEFS

Pay taxes early to avoid penalties, residents told

TAGUIG City government on Tuesday reminded business owners and real property taxpayers to heed the Jan. 20 deadline for tax payments and renewal of business licenses to avoid penalties and avail themselves of discounts. Taguig Assistant Treasurer Rhea Ay said the Business Permits Office and the Real Property Tax Division would encourage taxpayers to register working hours and to commute to accommodate clients until Jan. 20. He added that 14 satellite payment centers in the barangays would also be opened to assist mostly tax payments. The city government offers a 10-percent discount on early taxes paid on an annual basis, and five percent for quarterly payments available during the first 20 days of the quarter. Ruiz said tax payers who have not paid their annual taxes for the past years would be charged an eight percent penalty, while late quarterly payments would incur a penalty of two percent per month. Ruiz also announced that any business tax payment center would operate 12 hours to accommodate owners of realty taxpayers. Those included Forbes Park, Jan. 5 until May; Bonifacio, Jan. 7 and 8; Dasmariñas, Jan. 10 and 11; San Lorenzo, Jan. 12 and 13; Carmona, Jan. 14; Laguna, Jan. 15; San Antonio, Jan. 15; Binghal, Jan. 17; Pila and Pila, Jan. 18; Santa Rosa, Jan. 19; San Pedro, Jan. 19; West Bicutan, Jan. 19; and Pembo, Jan. 19. All the centers will open until payments from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. — Nanci C. Jimeno

Mandaluyong welcomes Don Bosco relic

MANDALUYONG City will welcome the relic of St. John Bosco Sunday at 2 p.m. on Jan. 8 from the East Bosco Technical Institute in Mandaluyong. A short program will be held until 4 p.m. before the relic is taken to the Salesian of Don Bosco Provincial House in Makati. It will be met with a motorcade led by Mandaluyong Mayor Benjamin Abalos Jr. and Mayor Bernie Abalos. A Don Bosco alumnus who was given the "Mandaluyong Boscoman" award for 2009, Bernie Buscemi is the former Vice Mayor from Sta. Mesa. Councilors Jose Atienza, Edward Bartolome, Mike Ocampo, Noel Bernardo, Francisco Wilson, Jumapao, nephew Ricardo Dominguez and Tracy Domingo will also welcome their patron saint, together with members of the Boscoman Association of Mandaluyong and Mandaluyong City Sta. Mesa, consisting of Salesian schools in the area and public sectors who graduated from Don Bosco Mandaluyong. The Don Bosco Technical College is known as the "Motherhouse of all Salesian Works in the Philippines," making it the oldest Salesian institute for higher learning in the country. Founded in 1952, the school's historical roots date back to 1948.

Fernando Carijao, 45

FERNANDO "Ding" Carijao, a senior reporter of the Journal Group of Publications, died yesterday of the Philippine National Police hospital due to a lingering illness. He was 45 years old. His body lies at Funeraria Paz on Aranda Avenue, Quezon City. The burial details and his services are later.

Charges filed against cop accused of rape

From page A11

Precinct in Tondo handed by Senior Insp. Joselito Binayug, was among several policemen charged for their alleged involvement in the torture and disappearance of 5 debtors.

Supt. Jimmy Tin of the MPD District Personnel and Human Resources Development Division told the journalists that when they showed the photographs of the two Bandolero, in the alleged rape victim, she pointed to the one assigned in DZRH.

"They have different middle names and ages. The one accused in the rape charge is 10 years old while the one allegedly involved in the torture case is 47 years old," Tin said.

Earlier, MPD director Chief Supt. Roberto Rosignolla ordered the reassignment of the Bandolero named in the rape complaint to the District Headquarters Support Unit.

However, Rosignolla changed his mind and said he now wants the policeman held at the National Capital Region Police Office headquarters in Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig City.

Rosignolla told the journalists in a phone interview that Bandolero went into hiding after he learned that the victim had filed a complaint against him.

"Our operatives and his former colleagues in the Anti-Illegal Drugs are still looking for him," he said.

He added that apart from the criminal charges, Bandolero would also be charged administratively with grave misconduct. "The Executive Order mandates that (when) he is found in the house for that," Rosignolla said.

At the same time, the police were also looking for Bandolero's companion, a man listed as a Tondo cop with the word "Pierce" written on it, who helped bring the victim to the MPD headquarters where she claimed the policeman raped her inside the Integrity Task Force (ITF) office.

Based on the complaint of the victim, the alleged rape happened on Dec. 31.

She told investigators that she was waiting for her live-in partner in Sta. Cruz, Manila, when a motorcycle and a tricycle stopped in front of her. She mentioned that one was on the motorcycle while riding in the tricycle was the man wearing the pervs T-shirt. Why them were two other women.

The man in the T-shirt then told the victim to come with them to the MPD headquarters where the two asked her to undress.

At the MPD headquarters, the victim claimed Bandolero undressed himself, took her inside the ITF office and then raped her. She added that he also took her mobile phone containing P4,000 in cash.

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The WORLD

Editor: Lawrence B. Ibarra

Iran invites EU, others to nuke sites

PARTIAL SOLAR ECLIPSE
The moon lines up between the sun and Earth, casting a lunar shadow over a cities on a dome of Bulgaria's Alexander Nevski Cathedral in Sofia on Jan. 4. The partial solar eclipse that began in the Middle East was ended across much of Europe. REUTERS

VIENNA—Iran has invited Russia, China, the European Union and its allies among the Arab and developing world to tour its nuclear sites in an apparent move to gain support ahead of a new round of talks with six world powers.

In a letter made available outstanding to The Associated Press, senior Iranian envoy Ali Asghar Soltanieh suggested the weekend of Jan. 21 and 30 for the tour and said that meetings "with high ranking officials" were envisaged.

Whilst no reasons was given for the timing of the offer, the letter came just weeks before Iran and the six powers followed up on recent talks that ended with agreement on little else but to meet again.

The new round between Iran, and the permanent UN Security Council members—the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France—plus Germany, is tentatively set for Istanbul, Turkey, in late January.

It is unsure to explain whether there is any significance behind the individuals called on Iran's nuclear program, viewed by the United States and its allies as a cover for secret plans to make nuclear arms—something Tehran denies.

Instead, the Islamic republic insists its activities are lawful and other countries are not only permitted but should help it to promote fuel for a future network of nuclear reactors.

Diplomats from delegations at the table with Iran during the December talks in Geneva told Tehran needs no commitments to talking about UN Security Council demands that it freeze sensitive enrichment—which can turn out both fuel and bomb-usable material. And human negotiators flatly ruled out discussing such demands at the Istanbul meeting.

International investors are great because Tehran developed its enrichment program clandestinely and because it refuses to cooperate with the UN's International atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) probe aimed to find how up on suspicions that it experimented with components of a nuclear weapons program, which Iran denies.

The offer of a visit comes more than three years after six diplomats from developing nations accredited to the IAEA visited Iran's uranium ore conversion site at Isfahan, which comes one uranium into the gas that is the subject into enriching centrifuges. Participating diplomats then told inspection they could not make an assessment of Iran's nuclear aims based on what they saw at that facility in central Iran.

But the new offer appeared more wide-ranging, both as far as the nations or groups invited and visits to be visited.

Dated Dec. 27, the four-paragraph letter offered no details beyond referring an offempowers panel "visit to Iran's nuclear sites."

But a diplomat familiar with its contents said the letter was mailed to Russia, China, Egypt, the group of nonaligned nations at the IAEA, Cuba, Arab League members at the IAEA, and Hungary, which currently holds the rotating EU presidency. AP

DNA clears man imprisoned for 30 years

DALLAS, TEXAS—Prosecutors declared a Texas man prisoned of a rape and robbery that put him in prison for 30 years, more than any other DNA exoneree in Texas.

DNA test results that cause look lately a match after Cornelius Dupree Jr. was paroled in July rocksalted him as the person who attacked a Dallas woman in 1979, prosecutors said on Monday. Dupree, who was 18 when he was sentenced to 75 years in prison in 1980.

Here 51, Dupree has spend more time wrongly imprisoned than any DNA exoneree in Texas, which has freed 41 wrongly convicted inmates through DNA since 2001—more than any other state.

Dupree's 30 years in prison still surpass that of James Woodard, who spent more than 27 years in a Texas prison for a murder that he was cleared of in 2008.

"Our Conviction Integrity Unit thorough, by unacknowledged that case, tested the biological evidence and based on the results,

CORNELIUS Dupree Jr. is reunited with his wife Debra after he was declared innocent. →

concluded Cornelius Dupree did not commit this crime," said Dallas County District Attorney Craig Watkins.

Dupree is expected to have his aggravated robbery and a deadly weapon conviction overturned on Tuesday at an exonerations hearing in a Dallas court.

There have been 21 DNA exonerations in Dallas since 2001, more than any other county in the nation. Only two states—Illinois and New York—have freed more of the wrongly convicted through DNA evidence than Dallas, according to the Innocence Project, a New York-based legal center representing Dupree and specializing in overturning convictions.

Dallas' record of DNA exonerations is unmatched nationally because the county crime lab maintains biological evidence even decades after a conviction, leaving samples available to test. In addition, Watkins has cooperated with innocence groups in reviewing thousands of requests for retesting for DNA testing.

Watkins, the first black district attorney in Texas history, has also pointed to what he calls "a current an all-in-one mentality" that he says permeated the District Attorney's office before he entered in 2007. AP

Fireworks blamed in US bird deaths

BEIME, ARKANSAS—New Year's revelers in a small Arkansas town were enjoying midnight fireworks when they noticed something odd: birds quite falling lifeless to city Brunswick of dead blackbirds.

The mid-winged blackbirds rained out of the darkness onto rooftops and sidewalks and into fields. One struck a woman walking her dog. Another hit a police cruiser.

Birds were "littering the streets, the yards, the driveways, everywhere," said Bobby King, a county wildlife officer in Beebe, a community of 5,000 northeast of Little Rock. "It was hard to drive down the street in some places without running over them."

Estimates on Monday said that fireworks appeared to have frightened the birds into such a frenzy that they crashed into homes, cars and each other. Some may have flown straight into the ground.

In all, more than 5,000 birds

stumbled to the ground.

"The blackbirds were flying at rooftop level instead of treetop level" in search of explosions above, said Karen Bosse, an ornithologist with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. "Hundreds have been sympathy, and they started colliding with things."

But Bosse stopped short of declaring the mystery solved, saying labs planned to test bird carcasses for toxins or disease. The other theory was that visual disturbances might have disoriented the flock or even just one bird that could have led the group in a bloody plunge to the ground.

A few stunned birds survived their fall and crawled around into the dark, authorities said. There was little light across the countryside at the time, save for the glimpses of fireworks and some lightning on the horizon. In the tumult, many birds probably lost their bearings. AP

African leaders offer amnesty deal to Gbagbo

ABIDJAN, IVORY COAST—African leaders on Monday offered Laurent Gbagbo one last chance to accept an amnesty deal—or confront the immediately rode power to the international community recognized winner of Ivory Coast's presidential election—or face a military ouster.

The leaders left hours later with no clear answer from the strongman president who has defied calls to step down, even though results tallied by the country's electoral commission and certified by the United Nations declared he had lost by a landslide to opposition leader Alassane Ouattara.

The trip to the coastal in less than a week by the three African presidents on behalf of the 15-members Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) is an attempt to give peacemakers a final chance before resorting to military force.

This time the leaders of Sierra Leone, Benin and Cape Verde were joined by Ecowas Prime Minister Raila Odinga, representing the African Union, as they chanted between meetings with Gbagbo and Ouattara.

Even as Gbagbo's meeting with the African leaders was going on, his closest advisers continued to insist that the 65-year-old had won the election, indicating that the sitting president did not intend to budge.

Speaking to reporters after meeting with the African leaders, Ouattara told reporters that the dialogue was over.

Ouattara added that an amnesty deal was still in the works of possibility, but only if Gbagbo ever agreed defeat. AP

WORLDBRIEFS

New food safety law

WASHINGTON—White consumers record peanut products are linked hundreds cases log a recent years, President Barack Obama said consumers should be able to have confidence that their grocer meets will keep peanut butter eating diet free safe—and that included his daughter Sasha. "That's what Sasha eats for lunch probably three times a week," Obama said Wed. "And you know, I don't want to have to worry about whether she's going to get sick as a consequence to having her lunch." On Tuesday, Obama is getting a chance to allay people's fears about the safety of their food. He is set to sign a $1.4 billion overhaul of the food safety system, giving Washington new powers to increase inspections of food processing facilities and force companies to recall tainted products. Congress passed the bill at the end of last year to respond to several serious outbreaks of E. coli and salmonella poisoning in peanuts, eggs and produce in the past few years. The law will be the first major overhaul of the US food safety system since the 1930s. AP

Racy videos at US Navy

BOSTON—Recently, custody videos made by a high-rank nighttime commander and those to the crew of an aircraft carrier flown on two years ago have suddenly proved an embarrassment to the Pentagon that could implicate the officers's career. The videos, released on Sunday by a newspaper in the Navy port city, Boston Sept. Eleven lawyers using gay slurs, performing nearly naked and staging suggestive shower scenes. They were played on the shipwide television system during weekly movie night when Chaves was executive officer, or second in command, of the USS Enterprise. Hanson has since become commander of the ship and received all those under his command are defending him. Over the weekend, the Navy at first downplayed the videos as "nonissues tapes," then called them "not acceptable" and said they are under investigation. AP

Crocodiles, snakes

BOCAS DEL TORO—Residents of an Australian city not off by some of the country's worst flooding in decades are being warned to stay out of the water, and not just because of the risk of being swept away. Debris, snakes and even crocodiles could also pose a danger. Large parts of the coastal city of Rockhampton were under water on Tuesday. The eastern were rain-swing, with the 75,000-strong population bracing for the floods' expected peak in the next 24 hours as a huge inland sea spanned by heavy rain across New South Wales continue to roll the ocean. AP

Las Vegas gets snow

LAS VEGAS—Gamblers on the Las Vegas Strip woke to snow flurries on Monday morning as part of a winter storm that is hitting the region along between Southern and central California. Up to 6 inches of snow is expected in the mountains ranging from the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, while the Las Vegas Valley could see between 1 and 3 inches of snow. The storm is expected to bring heavy rain to the valley floor. AP

He can't wait to fly again

NEW YORK— The seven-body bust after plunging more than nine months in the air to a shocked audience watching the Broadway musical "Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark" said he was itching to hear and may back into the web-slinger's costume. "I can't wait to get back to the show. I love being Spider-Man," Christopher Tierney said on Monday afternoon from The Peak brothers of Manhattan-Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Tierney suffered a fractured skull, a fractured cheekbone and a broken leg when he fell from the production's Foxwoods Theatre on Dec. 31 when his safety harness was accidentally left undropped during a preview performance. AP

Boy charged in mom's shooting

MILLERSBURG—A 13-year-old boy was charged in a murder and attempted murder in the fatal shooting of his mother and the critical wounding of her boyfriend on Monday, police said. The boy appeared on Monday in a Holmes County courthouse with his attorney, who ordered the juvenile equivalent of a not guilty plea. A judge ordered that the boy remain in Richland County Juvenile Detention as authorities investigate the shooting. AP

Man saved by garbage pile

NEW YORK—A would-be suicide jumper in New York was given confidence after leaping from a fourth-floor window but landing in a piled heap of garbage and collected cans the city's massive concentrator in east Asia. Gangsta Kaushan, 25, was hospitalized in critical but stable condition after jumping from his apartment on West 46th Street on Sunday afternoon, authorities said. Reuters

Ex-model steals the show

BRASILIA—In a new Brazilian grow-room chamber that is powerful women, a 27-year-old former beauty pageant contestant is competing with President Dilma Rousseff for the title of biggest media sensation. Photos of Mariella Tanner used her 70-year-old husband, Brazilianized Mental Donor, were plastered across the front pages of local newspapers for a second straight day on Monday after the pair followed media at weekend inauguration ceremonies. Reuters

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BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE I

INVITATION TO BID
(REBID)

The DepED Bids and Awards Committee I (BAC I), through the GAA 2011 intends to apply the sum of Pesos [illegible] being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for Purchase of Computer Sets for Secondary Schools Nationwem Two (All) Sets Grade 6 Teachbooks, this rebidding in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

The DepED BAC I now invites bids for the above mentioned project. Bidding of the Goods starting February to May 2011 immediate. Bidders should have completed, within 3 years prior to the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in the Bidding Documents, particularly, in Section II. Instructions to Bidders.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, cooperatives with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country that the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to RA 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from DepED - Bids and Awards Committee I and examine the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders starting on January 5, 2011 on the submitted bidder and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Php [illegible] Pesos Thousand & 00/100 (Php[illegible]).

It may also be downloaded free of charge from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) and the website of the procuring entity, provided that Bidders shall pay the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents not later than the submission of their bids.

The DepED – Bids and Awards Committee I will hold a Pre-Bid Conference on January 11, 2011 10:00 A.M. at Rotunda on Basketball Court Front Road I Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, which shall be open to all prospective bidders who have purchased the Bidding Documents.

Bid submission and opening shall be on January 25, 2011, 10:00 A.M. at the Rotunda on Basketball Court, Front Road I Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City. Late bids shall be disqualified. Bids will be opened publicly in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend. Late bids shall not be accepted.

The DepED – Bids and Awards Committee I reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the Bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

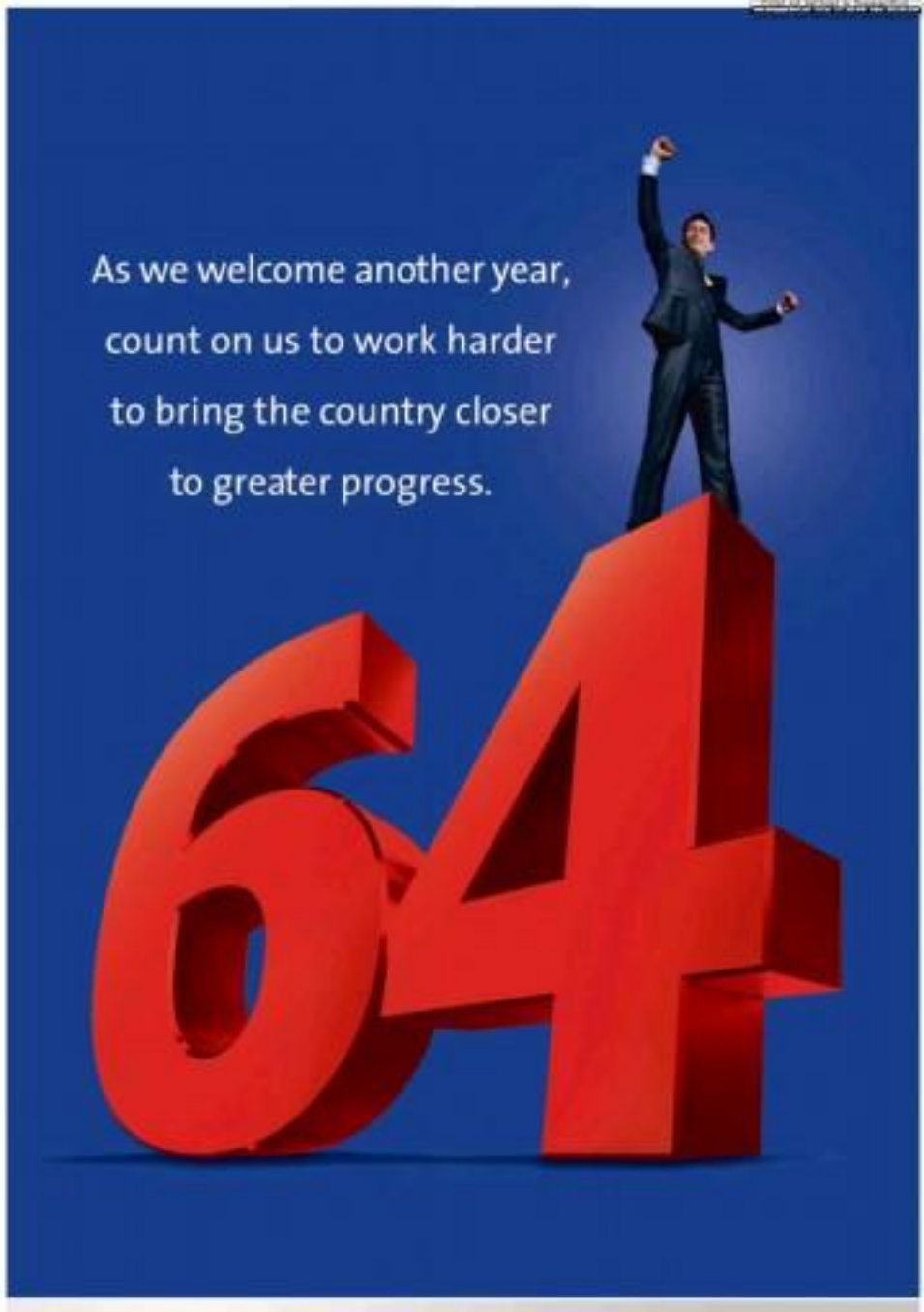
For further information, please refer to:

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE I

Theyllie Lacuna-Pederes, Jr.
Vice Chairperson
Procurement Service
Room 519, 5th Floor Mabini Bldg.
DepED Complex Meralco Avenue
Pasig City
(02) 636-0242; 636-0243
Telefax (02) 634-4865

(Sgd.) FRANCISCO M. VARELA
Undersecretary and BAC I Chairperson

As we welcome another year,
count on us to work harder
to bring the country closer
to greater progress.



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Editor Raul O. Marcelo ● Assistant Editor Connie S. Marlowe

BUSINESS

6%+ Interest Rate
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Gov't to issue $1B in peso bonds

Short-lists 6 foreign banks to handle flotation

By Ramon M. Dominguez

THE GOVERNMENT will float $1 billion worth of peso-denominated global bonds to kick off this year's foreign borrowing program, National Treasurer Roberto B. Tan said yesterday.

Tan told the business that the Bureau of the Treasury was "still firming up the timing" for the flotation and that it has short-listed six banks to manage the issue.

The list included Citigroup, HSBC, Credit Suisse, JP Morgan, Deutsche Bank and UBS.

"Timing will depend on market conditions, but we are looking at $1 billion, although we have authority to float up to $1.5 billion," Tan said.

He said the planned issuance for the first was "comfortable" and enough to establish a benchmark, referring to interest rates that the market could use as guides for debt instruments of the same length of maturity.

"Proceeds from the bond issuance will be used for budget support and for refinancing of maturing debts," Tan said, adding that a total of $1.2 billion in foreign borrowings would fall due in February.

The planned $billion will come on the heels of the maiden issue of 20-year peso-denominated global bonds last September, from which the government raised $1 billion or (P46.1 billion).

"Assuming Tan said the planned new issue might include 25-year bonds as well as shorter-term bonds.

The government under the Aquino administration has reserved its peso-global bonds could efforts to support deficit spending while limiting the country's exposure to external financial shocks.

In September, investors offered to buy $3.5 billion or more than 15 times the offered volume.

A dollar paper is considered global when it is offered to all markets in the world, including

GOVT B2

Investments in electronics sector hit $1.3B

By Abigail L. Hu

INVESTMENTS in the local semiconductor and electronics industry were estimated to have reached $1.25 billion last year, making 2010 only the third time the industry has breached the $1-billion investment mark.

According to documents from the Semiconductor and Electronics Industries of the Philippines Inc., the industry only surpassed $1 billion in foreign direct investments in 2000 and 2007.

Investments climbed in 2008 and 2009 due mainly to the global financial crisis, which significantly affected the electronics sector.

Last year, however, Seipi documents showed that FDIs in the sector possibly hit $1.3 billion, about 30 percent more than the group's initial $1 billion forecast.

Investments in 2010 came from both the expansion of existing operations as well as fresh infusions from new entrants.

Seipi president Dennis Santiago said the new investments would allow the industry to further grow exports in the coming months and years.

As of end-October last year, he said electronics exports had grown 44 percent, an indication of "a strong start and encouraging finish."

Seipi vice chair Arthur Neng said in an earlier interview that electronics exports should reach more than $30 billion this year and possibly hit at least $34 billion by 2015.

The industry last year registered $30 billion in exports.

INVESTMENTS B2

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Jan. 4, 2011
43.690

STOCK MARKET
Jan. 4, 2011
3.52

Data stock market report on Page B3

Stocks end higher

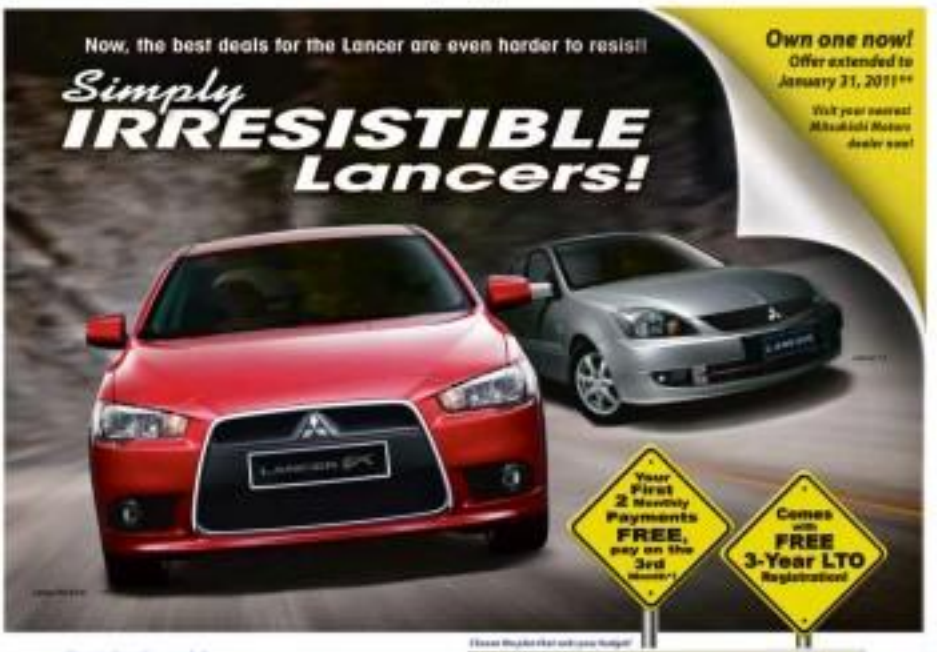
LOCAL STOCKS were a bit higher yesterday as a late session buying spree brought the main index to a positive close for the second straight session this 2011.

The composite Philippine Stock Exchange index added 3.52 points or 0.08 percent to 4,219.13, thereby sharing strength from upbeat global markets.

Profit-taking pressure persisted earlier in the day but at the end of the trading day, the mood got gay by the building firm's smarter showing up the index.

Value for terms' improved to P4.86 billion. Accompanied net gainers to six foreign investors recorded a net investment position of about P196 million. There were 87 advancers as against 79 decliners and 57 unchanged stocks.

STOCKS B3



Union Bank out of bond exchange

BIZ BUZZ
By the staff

THE LONG-RUNning ideological feud between Union Bank of the Philippines and the Philippine Trading and Exchange Corp. comes to a head late next month when the Ateneo-controlled bank chose not to renew its dealer's license with the fixed-income bourse.

(According to other sources, Union Bank was "asked to leave," but let's stick to the first angle, for narration purposes.)

According to some bankers familiar with the situation, UBP-Ateneo steadfastly in the hands of its president, Ric Valdepeñas, that the Securities and Exchange Commission (which regulates—or in some trades—transactions involving securities) has no supervisory power over the bank.

Of course, if Mr. Valdepeñas had his way, PDEx should not exist at all (but that's a long, long story best told another day).

Because of this philosophical dispute, UBP removed only its broker's license unto PDEx, but not its dealer's license. This means that UBP can trade bonds on the fixed-income exchange on behalf of its clients (what a broker does), but, technically, it cannot trade the same securities for its own account (a privilege reserved for accredited dealers). Here's the practical exclusion from PDEx: Union UBP's ability to cash in the process of "price discovering" (meaning the bank will have to check bond-worthy at prices quoted by others to it, and not set prices on its own)—somewhat like a "take it or leave it" situation.

This development, which occurred in early December 2010, makes UBP the only major bank not to be a part of PDEx.

As the unfolded, the House of Representatives also reopened a long-running investigation—its "sid of legislation," of course—into the activities of PDEx (which is owned by the Bankers Association of the Philippines and other institutional investors, and funded by the central bank).

Like in previous hearings, its vice Rep. Luis Villafuerte who had the most questions to ask of and the most to say against the bond exchange.

Strangely, the House committee on banks, which is leading the probe, is headed by no less than Rep. Sergio "Madam Witness" Apostol. But wait! Wasn't he an SEC nominee that ran on the UBP board during the previous administration? Is that a conflict of interest situation?

And, by the way, what did the Commission on Audit say about the business that government institutions receive while serving as state representatives on corporate boards? Hmmm. Interest. Later.

Autumn in PSE

LIKE a tree losing its leaves in autumn, most of them are leaving the Philippine Stock Exchange for an array of reasons not necessarily related to the departure of former Sid Ibarra as the bourse's president.

After the subsequent resignations of Vic Limlingan Trinidad and Susan Bernal, the PSE is also losing its head of human resources and administration, the head of corporate planning and research and another key officer at the corporate governance office. Some staff explain resignation or pastures while others have family matters to prioritize, one mentor say, for others, suffice to say their jobs were not for the faint-of-heart.

Why are there so many of them leaving at the same time? It's the season for head-hunting for many corporations, and it just so happened that the exchange—which has had a bigger share of recruitment office politics than the average firm—is a good hunting ground for those expanding by 2011.

Meanwhile, Trinidad, who is leaving the PSE as head of capital markets development and corporate services division on Jan. 16, is joining publicly listed mining firm Century Peak Metals Holdings Corp. as chief finance officer. Interestingly after quitting the bourse. —Boni C. Dumlao

P300 and the governorship

WHY the race for the governorship of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas surrounding this morning nonsensical, the name of Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo has also been mentioned as a possible contender for the throne.

As his "bragging right" to aspiring for the post, Guinigundo has for the longest time headed the BSP's economic research division, which employs, arguably some of the best economists and statistician-servings in the Philippine government. It is whispered sometimes that their inflation forecasts are more accurate than those of the National Statistics Office, but the BSP pays less quiet out of protocol.

Guinigundo also headed the committee that was tasked with redesigning the Philippines' paper currency.

Speaking of which, people familiar with the redesign process revealed to the Boss recently that the image of former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo—large enough to be unmistakable on the reverse side of the old P500 bill—was reduced, not only once, but several times until it became almost insignificant, satisfied that the facial features of the personalities involved could no longer be recognized.

The image of the Edsa 2 swearing-in was also moved to the reverse (i.e. front) side of the bill, but then the committee decided to move it to the edge of the design. It now sits on the border to the edge of the bill's face, and finally, portion of the image were severed by the placement of the bill's serial number.

Who knows? That might inspire President Aquino, who is a numismatic, to issue coins. —Boni C. Lanot

Got business news and a preview of this item the coming before it comes out. Text 09/ 892 4132/0920 xx 4567 (92.32/sider).

Gov't . . .

From page B1

North America, Europe and Asia. The government usually borrows from foreign commercial lenders in terms of US dollars, euros and yen.

Rudy Ocio, Finance Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said the issuance was the latest development in the government's proactive management of external liabilities, particularly with respect to reducing its vulnerability to exchange currency risk.

Purisima said the government wanted to lessen the exposure to the debt stock of currency exchange fluctuations by issuing more dollar paper to peso-dollar than to dollars-considering that the latter was more value the three days.

Investments . . .

From page B1

Santiago said the industry was bullish for 2011, with growth seen hitting at least 30 percent.

"No global electronics 'crash' appears to be looming for early 2011," he said.

The global semiconductor market is seen expanding 9 percent this year and likely track's stable growth path, mainly single-digit annually over the next five years, according to research firm International Data Group.

The industry sprang back from a slump brought by the global recession of 2008 and 2009 to grow 31 percent in 2010. Growth should slow down to single-digit levels in the next few years, however, as the sector starts to re-stabilize.

BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Circular No.705

Series of 2010

Subject: Revised Check Clearing and Settlement Processes

Pursuant to the Monetary Board Resolution No. 1811 dated 16 December 2010, Circular No. 691 dated 08 February 2010 is hereby amended as follows:

Section 1. The Revised Check Clearing and Settlement Processes as embodied in Circular No. 691 dated 08 February 2010 shall become effective as follows:

Clearing Exchanges	From	To
1. Integrated Inside Manila Local Exchanges (Integrated CM LX)	01 January 2011	24 January 2011
2. Regional Local Exchanges (RLX)	01 January 2011	01 July 2011

Provided, That for RLX, the extended cutoff from 24 January 2011 to 01 July 2011 shall refer only to the provision of Circular No. 691 on the mandatory return of checks drawn against insufficient funds or credit, checks drawn against closed accounts and/or checks with stop payment orders, i.e., not later than 7:30 AM of the next clearing day following the original presentation to PCHC or RCC, subject to the condition that checks returned due to insufficiency of funds or credit shall no longer be allowed to be re-used or funded after the day they were presented to PCHC or RCC.

Section 2. Section 4205 and Subsection 4205.1 of the Manual of Regulations for Banks are hereby combined and amended to read as follows:

"Section 4205. Returned Checks

"A. Checks Without Sufficient Funds/With Stop Payment Orders. To complement the provisions of Bates Remittance Reg. 22 (An Act Penalizing the Making or Drawing and Issuance of a Check Without Sufficient Funds or Credit), the following regulations shall govern checks drawn against insufficient funds and checks drawn against closed accounts:

a. The drawee bank shall affix to the check a Return Stamp indicating therein the date when the check is returned and the reason for the refusal to pay the same to the holder thereof.

b. For checks which shall be dishonored or returned by reason of insufficiency of funds or credit, the drawee bank shall indicate the remark or notation "Drawn Against Insufficient Funds", "No Funds", or "Insufficient Funds" on the Return Stamp. For checks which shall be dishonored or returned for the reason that such or drawn against a closed account, the drawee bank shall indicate the remark or notation "Account Closed".

c. Notwithstanding receipt of an order to stop payment, the drawee bank shall likewise indicate in the Return Stamp, the remarks or notations mentioned in item "a" hereof indicating that there were no sufficient funds in or credit with such bank for the payment in full of such check or the account is closed, if such be the fact. The bank shall also indicate receipt of a stop payment order.

"For checks which shall be dishonored for the reason that payment has been stopped, the following shall be observed:

a. The drawee bank shall affix to the check a Return Stamp indicating therein the date when the check is returned and the reason for the refusal to pay the same to the holder thereof.

b. The drawee bank shall indicate the remark or notation "Payment Stopped" or "With Stop Payment Order" on the Return Stamp.

"B. Checks and Other Cash Item (CCID) dishonored for the reason that such a drawn against insufficient funds or credit, or is drawn against a closed account, or payment thereof has been stopped shall be returned by the drawee bank to the negotiating bank not later than 7:30 AM on the clearing day immediately following the original date of presentation of the CCID to PCHC or RCC.

"1) For Local Exchanges

"Each shall only be one (1) clearing window for CCIDs returned due to insufficient funds or credit, closed account and/or stop payment order in the Integrated CM LX and RLX.

"The settlement of interbank transactions vis-à-vis clearing reserve requirement deficiency of banks' demand deposit account (DDA) is shown in Appendix 58.

"The AM returned CCID clearing window for CCIDs dishonored due to insufficiency of funds or credit, closed account and/or stop payment order in the Integrated CM LX and in the RLX shall be considered from 12:00 AM to 7:30 AM on the clearing day immediately following the original date of presentation of the CCID to PCHC or RCC.

"Returned CCID in the AM clearing window shall be given value on the same date as the date of original presentation of the CCID to PCHC or RCC. The amount of debits and credits on the date of original presentation shall be reversed to the extent of the amount of credits and debits arising from the returned CCID. The process restores the balances of the demand deposits of banks with the BSP to their position prior to the settlement of the clearing results effected by the CCID later returned due to insufficient funds or credit, closed account and/or stop payment order.

"(2) For Integrated CM Outward to Region, Integrated CM Inward from Region and Region to Region Clearing Operations

"A CCID dishonored by reason of insufficiency of funds or credit, drawn against a closed account and/or stop payment order shall continue to be covered by Clearing Items issued by BSP and relevant PCHC Clearing House Rules and Regulations.

"(3) CCID not Cleared Through the Clearing System

"A CCID dishonored by reason of insufficiency of funds or credit, drawn against a closed account and/or stop payment order which was not cleared through the clearing system shall be returned by the drawee bank to the holder or the negotiating bank, as the case may be, not later than the banking day following the date the CCID is presented for payment with the drawee bank.

"The negotiating bank shall, in turn, return a CCID dishonored by reason of insufficiency of funds or credit, drawn against a closed account and/or stop payment order to the drawee bank not later than the banking day following its receipt of the dishonored CCID from the drawee bank.

"B. Checks Dishonored due to Technical Reasons. A CCID dishonored due to technical reasons other than stop payment order shall be returned by the drawee bank to the negotiating bank not later than the afternoon regular clearing.

"x x x"

Section 3. Effectivity. This Circular shall take effect fifteen (15) calendar days after publication either in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation.

For the Monetary Board

(Sgd.) **AMANDO M. TETANGCO, JR.**
Governor

22 December 2010

ANNEX A: CHECKS DISHONORED FOR INSUFFICIENT FUNDS / CLOSED ACCOUNT / STOP PAYMENT ORDER

Original RLX Regions
1. Laoag, Ilocos Norte
2. Tuguegarao, Cauayan and Ilagan
3. Tuguegarao, Cauayan
4. Cabanatuan, Gapan
5. Cabanatuan, Gapan
6. Cabanatuan, Gapan
7. Cabanatuan, Gapan
8. Cabanatuan, Gapan
9. Cabanatuan, Gapan
10. Cabanatuan, Gapan
11. Cabanatuan, Gapan
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13. Cabanatuan, Gapan
14. Cabanatuan, Gapan
15. Cabanatuan, Gapan
16. Cabanatuan, Gapan

Meralco expects big customers shifting to other suppliers

Open-access, retail competition by mid-2011

By Amy R. Remo

MANILA ELECTRIC Co. expects close to 600 of its customers to potentially shift to new electricity suppliers, once the government begins implementing the much-awaited open access and retail competition.

Larry Fernandez, head of utility economics at Meralco, said separate that consumption of the 570 customers that could potentially shift was equivalent to 25 percent of the company's total kilowatt-hour sales. "These large power customers are those that consume one megawatt or more of electricity a month.

According to Fernandez, Meralco was now preparing the infrastructure needed to support the operations under the open access regime, which may be implemented this year.

"We're defining specifications for information systems, how customers can shift from one supplier to another. We're still waiting for actual specifications from the Energy Regulatory Commission for computations purposes," he explained.

Fernandez admitted that Meralco's gross sales figures might decline once these customers shift to new suppliers, but since these revenues are considered "pass through" ones where will be paid to the power generation companies, the net income would not be affected, Meralco, he added, would still be paid for the use of wires of for its distribution services.

Meralco services electricity for its 4.6 million customers from its deregulated power producers EPIRA, state-run National Power Corp. and the wholesale electricity spot market (WESM).

But under the open access regime, big power users will be able to choose their own suppliers, an idea under the current system where they are limited to the supplier that has jurisdiction over their respective areas. The scheme is expected to further spur competition and result in better, more competitive electricity prices.

Energy Secretary Jose Rene Almendras earlier said they were hoping that the Department of Energy would be able to submit its recommendations to implement open access by the middle of 2011.

For open access to be implemented, the government needed to achieve the requirements as mandated by the Electric Power Industry Reform Act.

AGI's $500-M offshore bond issue cited

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE $500-MILLION offshore bond debut of tycoon Andrew Tan's property- and consumer-based holding firm Alliance Global Group Inc. was recently cited as "best single-bond Bond" in 2010 by international publication Asiamoney.

In an December 2010-January 2011 issue, Asiamoney said the seven-year bond deal managed by UBS in August 2010 demonstrated "the strength of demand for credits from the country whose tail-wind."

The seamless bond issuance earned a coupon of 6.5 percent per year, the lowest coupon ever achieved by a Philippine issuer for an overseas debt with a maturity of more than five years.

"Execution was quick, with only 36 hours from announcement to pricing. In addition, the book was oversubscribed within the first 30 minutes of bookbuilding," data-mineers said.

"This was a deal that bankers of every suspected would get a good response. It did," the magazine said.

International corporate issues from the Philippines are quite rare although there had been a handful of deals sealed, Asiamoney said.

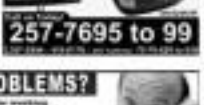
"These bonds are traditionally supported by a strong bid from Philippine investors looking for somewhere to put their dollars to outperform, which investors elsewhere see as an effective liquidity backstop," Asiamoney said.

About 17 percent of the issuance was taken up by investors from the Philippines while Hong Kong and Singapore combined accounted for 72 percent. Europe had a share of 7 percent while offshore US accounts took up 4 percent.

The issuance was priced on Thursday at a yield of 6.625 percent, which was tighter than the initial guidance yield of 6.75 percent.

AGI's revenue come largely from its real estate development arm, Megaworld Corp., which accounts for 69 percent of the business. The consumer business contributes about 14 percent primarily through liquor manufacturer Emperador Distillers and fast-food restaurant holding firm Golden Arches Development Corp.

Emperador Distillers produces leading brands labels Emperador and Generoso. Golden Arches is the master franchise holder of McDonald's in the Philippines.



Stocks

In Wall Street, stocks were nearing new multi-year highs. Overnight, the Dow Jones industrial index was up 97.24 points or 0.81 percent at 11,978.75 on optimism over the New Year.

"The start of 2011 has seen a relatively positive mood pervading markets although a clearer trend is likely to be established as the week progresses and more market participants return," said investment bank Credit Agricole-CIB.

An increase in the UK manufacturing index and a bigger than forecast rise in Mercedes' countries spending aided sentiment, Credit Agricole said.

The stocks that gained on trading volume were Meralco, Swiftfoods, Belle Corp., First Holdings, DMCI Holdings, Nickel Asia, Apex, Abaxbol Power and EDC.

Dealers said bank stocks may take to the card this days as some investors might want to pocket gains from the rising market rise since December when the index bounced from a near six-month level at 4,000. Boris C. Dumlao

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

FOR THE SALE OF INDUSTRIAL GENERATORS

Tuntex Storage Device (Phils.), Inc. will conduct bidding for Industrial Generators with the following specifications:

Quantity	3 Engines
Brand	Mitsubishi (Heavy Industries)
Engine Number	6GL1-PTA
Type	4 cycle, direct injection, turbo charged with air cooler
Cylinders	6 (in-line)
Power Axis	1,420 HP | 560 KW | 500 RPM (per unit)
Output Voltage	4160
Application	Industrial
Condition	8 units running & 1 unit out of use

1. The Bid forms and schedule will be issued and informed to all interested parties upon presentation of the following documents:
   - Letter of Intent
   - Company profile
   - Audited financial statement for the last 3-years
2. An applicant who cannot submit the required documents shall be disqualified from the award.
3. Pre-qualified bidders will be required a cash bond deposit to Tuntex Storage Device (Phils.), Inc. amounting to P100,000.00.
4. Bid amount must be exclusive of duties and taxes and all other expenses related to dismantling. Other PEZA and BOC rules and regulations shall apply.

Deadline of submission of the aforementioned documents shall be on January 13, 2011.

Applicants may submit their application on the following address with subject "BID APPLICATION"

Indirect Material Procurement Section
Purchasing Department
Tuntex Storage Device (Phils.), Inc.
ISEPZ, Carmelray Industrial Park 1, Canlubang, Calamba, Laguna

"for we belong to the Land and the Land we belong to is good."

Angel L. Javellana

accomplished his mission on earth on 30 December 2010 in the service of his family and his community, for the greater glory of God

His wife **Chelo**, children **Mitos** and **Oscar**, **Ito** and **Bobby** (†), **Minet**, **Joby** and **Tracy**, **Carmela**, **Ignace** and **Suzie**, **Grachel** and **Charles**, along with his 20 Grandchildren and 11 Great-grandchildren desire that he be remembered for his love and laughter.

First and foremost he was a teacher, whether he was involved in pineapple and other crop cultivation, livestock, pharmaceuticals, or manufacturing. In retirement he continued to teach management skills to plantation managers, rural officials, and farmers while pursuing his passion for natural farming.

In lieu of flowers, please send a donation to De La Salle College for their Soccer Development Program. (Contact Minda Rapale on 02-526-4244 in the Office of Sports Development).

Masses will be celebrated at the following chapels on January 8, 2011:

Del Monte Chapel, Cavayanon, Bukidnon	-	3:00 pm
Carmelite Chapel, Jaro, Iloilo	-	6:30 am
Pink Sisters Chapel, Baguio City	-	6:30 am

Arch. RENATO "GORDON" B. BACUNGAN

of Agoo, La Union

November 23, 1944 – January 3, 2011

His bereaved wife, **Prof. Amalia Ordoña**, children, **Kristine Rhea**, **Gabriel**, **Daniel** & **Ezekiel**; brother, sisters, in-laws, nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Basilica Of Our Lady of Charity, Agoo, La Union.

Interment will be on Friday, January 7, 2011 after the 9:30 A.M. Mass at the Agoo Cemetery.

Mereed Singson Callanta

of Cangatan, Pangasinan, passed away on January 4, 2011 at the age of 56.

His children **Julie** & **Richard Hitchhouse** and **Emilou** & **Manny Jardeo**; and sister **Primitiva** & **Rafael Cruz**, **Alejandro** & **Olympia**, **Gabriel** & **Minerva**, **Leslie Vinson**, **Nihil** & **Nenet Mendoza**, grandchildren **Julius** & **Lily**, **Aurelius** & **Jing** and **Lance** & **Fides**, great grandchildren, relatives and friends, request the prayers readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Angels Memorial Chapel, Dorothea, Santa Barbara.

Interment will be at Angels Memorial Park, Binalonan, on Saturday, January 8, 2011 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

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St. Anthony's Bldg., Aurora Blvd. Cubao, Quezon City
721-2262 • 721-1521 • Fax 912-9151

GB Magsaysay Mandaluyong City
534-2270 • 687-2284 • Fax 535-5283

SP Tuvalita's Life Bldg., 486 T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita Manila (in front of National Library) Trunkline 523-8570 loc. 150 or 910 Telefax 735-0013

Antipolo Satellite Ofc. Pioneer Car Care Center (formerly Marcos Highway, Sta. Mesa) Antipolo City (Opposite Puregold) across B.I.R.) Tel. 9104531 GP-09277555555 email address: hotlinesph@gmail.com

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
-Matthew 10:39

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CLASSIFIEDS

PETRON

For Sale- Makati Office Space
Trafalgar Plaza Building

Location: Trafalgar Plaza Building
103 HV Dela Costa St.
Salcedo Village, Makati City

Units:		
	19th Floor	692.96 sqm
	17th Floor	692.96 sqm
	16th Floor	671.10 sqm
	15th Floor	692.74 sqm
	20th Floor	688.74 sqm
	21st Floor	688.74 sqm
	22nd Floor	688.74 sqm
	23rd Floor	688.74 sqm
	24th Floor	688.74 sqm
	25th Floor	688.74 sqm
	26th Floor	688.74 sqm
	27th Floor	688.74 sqm

Sale price: P37,000/sqm +VAT with financing

For further information please contact:
Jezzie Roe S. Chua
Petron Corporation
Tel: 884 3038
Mobile: 0915 8700718
Email: jezziechua@yahoo.com

PETRON

For Sale- Makati Office Space
Petron Megaplaza Building

Location: Petron MegaPlaza
Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue
Makati City

Units:		
	28th Floor	1,500 sqm
	29th Floor	1,500 sqm
	30th Floor	1,200 sqm
	31st Floor	1,200 sqm
	32nd Floor	1,200 sqm
	34th Floor	1,500 sqm
	35th Floor	1,500 sqm
	36th Floor	1,500 sqm
	37th Floor	987 sqm
	38th Floor	987 sqm
	39th Floor	987 sqm
	40th Floor	987 sqm
	41st Floor	897 sqm
	42nd Floor	897 sqm
	43rd Floor	897 sqm
	44th Floor	897 sqm

Sale price: P65,000/sqm +VAT with financing

For further information please contact:
Jezzie Roe S. Chua
Petron Corporation
Tel: 884 3038
Mobile: 0915 8700718
Email: jezziechua@yahoo.com

City Government of Dumaguete
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
City Hall, Dumaguete City

INVITATION TO BID

The **CITY GOVERNMENT OF DUMAGUETE**, Negros Oriental, invites eligible contractors to apply for the following items:

Name of Projects	Approved Budget for the Contract	Date / Time		Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)
		Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline / Opening of Bids	
1. Drugs and Medicines	₱ 1,351,000.00	Jan. 14, 2011 10:00 am	Jan. 21, 2011	₱ 500.00

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the Office of the City Mayor-Procurement, Acquisition and Award Division (PAAD) and inspect the Bidding Documents from 8:00 am to 5:00 PM starting **January 05, 2011.**

The Bidder shall drop and enclose the original of the Technical Proposal in one sealed envelope, whereas, the original of the Financial Proposal shall be enclosed in another sealed envelope. Both envelopes shall then be placed in an other single envelope, to the BAC Secretariat at the abovementioned address.

For more information, please call the Procurement, Acquisition and Awards Division at Telephone No. **(035) 422-7053**.

The **CITY GOVERNMENT OF DUMAGUETE** reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) DR. MARIO B. MISOLA
BAC Chairman

(PEI – January 05, 2011)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Regional Office No. IV-A
#1 Overseas Bldg. E. Arijo Street, Legaspi City
Telefax Nos.: (045) 435-0181

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATIONS FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMITS (AEPTS)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits:

	Name and Address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National(s) Employee(s)	Position
1.	RELIANCE LYNDEL S. CHANSON (MANUFACTURING CORP., Imperial, Cavite)	Ms. Tsang Lai Chung/ Chinese	Assistant Vice President
2.	CHANSON ELEVEN (PHILIPPINES) INCORPORATED (SEL, Imperial, Cavite)	Ms. Tsai Cheng Sang/ Taiwan	General Manager
3.	CHANSON ELEVEN (PHILIPPINES) INCORPORATED (SEL, Imperial, Cavite)	Ms. Shenhua Wang/ Chinese	Vice – General Manager

If you have any information/objection to the above-mentioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

ATTY. RICARDO S. VALMONTE, CE, CESO (III)
Regional Director

(PEI – January 05, 2011)

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

PUBLIC NOTICES

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TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

dti

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that ONG WALNUT BEVERAGE CORPORATION is applying for registration with the BOARD OF INVESTMENTS (BOI) as Expanding (Activities of the following Mass Housing Projects:

Project	Location	Housing Units
Mabolo Estate	Mabolo, Brgy. Sabang, Cebu City	600
Casa Rosa Subdivision	Brgy. Don Pedro, Minglanilla, Cebu	416

Any person with valid objection/s on the above mentioned project/s may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) EDMUNDO L. BAGAYNO
Director
Projects Evaluation and Registration Division

(PEI – January 5, 2011)

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BUSINESS

NEW JOINT VENTURE
San Miguel Corp. president Ramon Ang shares his views with Ms. Irene Castro Port Terminal Inc. president Michael Bonner following the signing of a share sale and purchase agreement between Pod-ne Corp. and MCPI for the acquisition by the SMC subsidiary of 15 percent of the outstanding and issued shares of MNHPI. Harbour Centre owns 65 percent of the port operator.

PH exports seen growing by 13% yearly up to 2013

Exporters still complaining about strong peso

By Abigail L. Ho

EXPORTERS CONTINUE to complain about the strong peso's adverse impact on the country's export sector, saying this is the primary reason for the conservative export growth projection of just 13 percent annually over the next three years.

Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr., president of the Philippine Exporters Confederation Inc. (Philexport), said the strong peso endangered the sustainability of the industry's growth.

The strong local currency, he said, was actually what prompted the Export Development Council to set a relatively "modest" target for 2011-2013.

In an earlier interview, EDC executive director and Bureau of External Trade Promotion Director Senen Perfecto said the draft of the 2011-2013 Philippine Export Development Plan set a growth target of only 13 percent a year for the period covered.

From January to October last year, the country's export receipts increased by 37.2 percent, recovering from a slump caused by the global financial crisis in 2008 and 2009.

Ortiz-Luis said the export sector had the potential to expand by at least 25 percent a year in the next three years, even if not for the strong peso.

Should the peso-dollar exchange rate remain within the 43.43-to-1 dollar, he said the industry's growth could be slanted to just around 13 percent a year from 2011 to 2013.

He said that at P46 to a dollar, many exporters, especially the small ones, were forced to downsize and even shut down their operations. At the P45 level, the electronics sector also began to feel the squeeze, dropping some of their product lines, as exports became uncompetitive.

With the current exchange rate just within the 43-44 to $1, even business process outsourcing firms were beginning to re-examine their expansion plans.

The peso closed at 43.84 to a greenback on Monday.

Filinvest increasing public float to 29.5%

By Doris C. Dumlao

SOTHEBY'S-LED Filinvest Development Corp. is set to sideline its public float to 29.5 percent from only 6 percent via a multi-billion peso stock offering to be launched today.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, FDC announced the start of a follow-on equity offering of up to 2.5 billion shares with an additional 15 percent over-allotment option.

The offering is worth P10.975 billion based on current market prices. But assuming the usual discount of 10-20 percent given to follow-on offerings, the transaction can raise PP billion to P13.5 billion. FDC prior closed yesterday at P5.5 per share, down by 1.9 percent.

In the disclosure, FDC said it would embark on a two-week global investor roadshow beginning today and that the transaction would likely be completed by the end of January.

The Getaways have mandated UBS AG as the sole global coordinator and joint bookrunner while JP Morgan Securities Ltd. was tapped as joint bookrunner for the offering.

The primary offering will involve the sale of FDC shares by principal stockholder AG Holdings Corp. and a simultaneous subscription by AG of an equivalent number of shares to be issued by FDC.

"Total proceeds from the 2.5 billion FDC shares will be used by FDC for land and hospitality) business development, bank capitalization, investment in the infrastructure and office/business and debt repayment," it said in the disclosure.

The company can issue more shares if need arises as its board earlier approved a follow-on offering of up to three billion FDC common shares. The oversubscription option in this case is at the set at 15 percent or about 375 million additional common shares.

Globe eyes wider network coverage, better services

AYALA-LED Globe Telecom Inc. is stepping up efforts to increase its network capacity and improve services to gain a bigger market share in the country's competitive telecommunications industry.

Globe said it would take on a multipronged approach in enhancing network capacity and performance to meet the growing demand for voice and data services of its customers.

"The aim for the company is to offer subscribers better voice and data experience across all product types," Globe said in a statement.

"This year, we will continue to build on service quality as a key differentiator for Globe. We will implement a proactive approach in meeting the upsurge in voice and data requirements across all customer segments," Globe president and CEO Ernest Cu said.

"Upcoming cell-cutting units will help ensure wider coverage. We will also improve power and transmission management to meet our quality objectives," he said.

He said investments made by the company in the previous year would bear fruit in 2011 and this was seen helping Globe improve its market position.

Last year, Globe completed several major international and domestic transmission projects including its second fiber optic backbone network (PCHNS), a 870-million high-capacity transmission system. The additional capacity is expected to support the expected growth in data usage in the country.

Globe has some 32,000 base stations and 6,500 cell sites to support its telephony and broadband Internet services. **Paolo G. Montecillo**

Nissan Marks the Dawn of Modern Luxury with the All-New Teana 3.5L

Set to usher in the discriminating needs of a modern corporate executive, the all-new Nissan Teana recently stormed into the local automotive market with a world-class performance, premium European design, class-leading hospitality and comfort, and a host of new features and options.

Already one of the most popular premium sedans in its segment, the new Teana has arrived in showrooms, boasting of a comprehensive suite of features built to deliver performance, versatility and capability. Now, Nissan Motor Philippines, Inc. (NMPI) has handed up Teana lineup with the introduction of the 3.5L variant, featuring the globally renowned VQ-VE engine - the only engine to be included in the coveted Ward's 10 best engines list for 14 consecutive years.

At the heart of the all-new Nissan Teana is the concept of offering customers a dynamic and superior sedan with an attractive modern luxurious styling that is much more refreshing and easy on the eyes compared to other vehicles in its class.

"The all-new Nissan Teana 3.5L is meant to reflect NMPI's continually strong and unabated commitment to constantly offer high-quality products that maximize the pleasure of driving, and the pride of owning a Nissan," NMPI President and CEO Alan Chan said.

Coined from the Native American word which carries the meaning 'dawn,' the Teana 3.5L denotes the beginning of an all-new modern luxury sedan. With its modern styling, impressive ride comfort and thoughtful appointments, the Teana was designed and engineered to provide lasting value in a luxury sedan reflecting a new dimension of hospitality, superb comfort and a quiet, spacious interior.

The Teana's rigid body structure is built with 980 MPA Ultra Steel with light weight and high strength characteristics similar with the Francis Nuclear submarine.

The all-new Nissan Teana 3.5L is offered with a choice of four attractive exterior colours: White Pearl, Sapphire Black, Deep Amethyst Purple, Brilliant Silver. Experience the all-new Teana 3.5L, now available at all Nissan dealerships nationwide.

Asia share prices rise; oil near 27-month high

SINGAPORE—Asian stocks advanced on Tuesday and oil hovered near a 27-month high, supported by US data suggesting that recovery in the world's biggest economy was gathering momentum.

Japanese shares hit a 7½ month high on Tokyo's first trading session of the New Year, a day after the United States reported continued strong gains at its fastest clip in seven months in December. US stocks hit new two-year highs overnight.

The said big bet for the US economy comes later this week when the government will publish its December jobs report.

US economic data get to boost New Year optimism

"Market players are now focusing on the US payrolls data due on Friday, which will likely have an impact on both Wall Street shares and the dollar/yen rate," said Kazuhiro Takishima, general manager at Daiwa Capital Markets in Tokyo.

The Nikkei rose 1.7 percent, led by shares in resource companies as oil and commodity prices rose on the stronger economic growth outlook this year.

Stocks are also getting a boost from the "January effect" when fund managers are no longer distracted by year-end window dressing and instead focus on stocks they find attractive, traders said.

The MSCI index of shares excluding Japan was 0.21 percent higher, led by advances in the South Korean Kospi and the Shanghai Composite Index, where property stocks jumped 5 percent as worries about further monetary tightening eased after survey indicated that Chinese factory

While the mood was upbeat across much of Asia, shares in Australia slipped into negative territory and both the Australian and New Zealand dollars were under pressure because of worries over the impact of floods in northeast Australia.

"The lights were flashing a very weakuse green at the start of the session but now it has flashed. I suspect it will cause bank a bit lower," said Michael Hefferman, strategist at Westpac Group. "The floods are likely to have some impact on coal stocks."

The US dollar rose 0.2 percent to ¥83.93 yen, having pulled up from an eight-week low of ¥83.81 yen hit on trading platform EBS on Monday.

Analysts expect more traction for the greenback in the months ahead as the recovery gathers strength.

Oil was steady at $91.46, near its highest levels in more than two years as accelerating manufacturing activity in the US and frigid winter weather fanned optimism that US crude inventories will continue to drop. *Reuters*

Bank of America reaches $2.8-B settlement with Fannie, Freddie

NEW YORK—Bank of America Corp. reached a $2.8-billion settlement with Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac over claims that one of its businesses sold bad mortgages.

The payout is far lower than analysts expected and removes some uncertainty that has hovered over the bank.

The settlement is the biggest yet involving banks and the two government-backed mortgage giants, which combine to suffer huge losses from the collapse of the housing market. Analysts and investors have been waiting to see how hard a line Fannie and Freddie would take with big mortgage lenders such as Citigroup Inc., JPMorgan Chase & Co. and Wells Fargo & Co.

Some estimates can as high as $100 billion for a Bank of America settlement.

"The government gave Bank of America a very attractive deal," said Christopher Whalen, managing director of Institutional Risk Analytics.

Bank stocks rallied on the news, with Bank of America up more than 6 percent and Wells Fargo up 2 percent. Other settlements are likely soon.

The claims stem from mortgages sold to Fannie and Freddie by former mortgage giant Countrywide Financial, which Bank of America bought in 2008.

The two government-backed agencies buy mortgages from lenders and resell them to investors. They want banks to buy back mortgages that had incorrect information about the income and other qualifications of borrowers. During the housing boom, lenders such as Countrywide routinely gave mortgages to people who ultimately couldn't afford them. This is the time for the financial meltdown in 2008. Most of the mortgages that Fannie and Freddie want to sell back to the banks are in default.

By removing this as an issue, Bank of America CEO Brian Moynihan hopes investors will buy his strategy of focusing on customers and building its traditional banking business.

But Bank of America has several big challenges remaining. Last fall, the bank was accused of using faulty documents to foreclose on thousands of homeowners.

But Bank of America spokesman Jerry Dubrowski said the bank has set aside enough reserves for such issues. As part of the settlement, the bank anticipated that its fourth-quarter provisions for losses will be $3 billion and that it will take a charge against earnings of about $2 billion.

"The settlement clears the air and puts the issue behind for Bank of America," said Bert Ely, president of bank consultant Ely & Co. *AP*

A TREE GROWS IN TOKYO
It's not a window, a door (you) cut in the Tokyo Sky Tree, which is still under construction. On the first business day after the holiday Japan Prime Minister Naoto Kan gave a speech, vowing to step up his push for the country to join a trans-Pacific free trade pact, despite opposition from farmers fearing cheaper imports. *AP*

AIG gets alternative bid for Taiwan unit

TAIPEI—American International Group's protracted sale of its Taiwan unit took another twist on Tuesday when a local firm proposed jointly running the unit with the bailed-out insurer instead of a sale that AIG had been pushing for.

AIG has been trying to sell the unit, Nan Shan Life, since October 2009 and looks to pay back the US government for its bailout. It drew four bidders in a first round in December, with reports putting the offers at up to as high as $2 billion.

But on Tuesday, hours secretly from Taiwan Secom Group said it has proposed jointly running Nan Shan with the US insurer and listing the unit in Taiwan.

Taiwan Secom, partly owned by Japan's Secom and an affiliate of insurer Fire Goldman, is setting up a holding company with Hong Kong investment firm Primus Financial to acquire a stake in Nan Shan, said Shin Chu, a director of Taiwan Secom.

"We and the American side are not just looking around," he said, adding Taiwan Secom did not participate in the first round of bidding that ends held last month.

Chu declined to say how much Taiwan Secom would spend to acquire part of Nan Shan, or the size of any stake.

AIG's first attempt to sell Nan Shan last year was blocked by Taiwan legislators and it has subsequently said it wants to sell the unit but about the same amount as the $2.15 billion it was valued last year.

In December it drew bids from Taiwanese banks Cathay Financial, Chinatrust and Fubon, late conglomerate Formosa Group emerged as the front-runner in the bidding.

It is unclear whether AIG would accept Taiwan Secom's proposal. Taiwan regulators have previously suggested a Taiwan listing for AIG has said it wants a stake.

Regulators have left it up to AIG to decide on what it wants to do with Nan Shan and are waiting for AIG to come up with a definitive offer.

The regulator has set five conditions for any buyer.

These are that any buyer needs to show fund-raising ability for future expansions, a long-term commitment to run Nan Shan and experience in running an insurance company, and must promise to take care of employees and policy holders and must have funding sources that meet Taiwan regulations.

A first deal to sell the unit to Primus and Hong Kong-based China Strategic was rejected after regulators said it did not meet all these conditions.

"AIG is the only one that's making rules of the game," said an official of one of the four Taiwanese companies that had submitted bids. "They still have not told us what is coming up next."

Nan Shan is Taiwan's third largest insurer by market share after the homeowner units of Cathay and Fubon and has assets of $56.5 billion. *Reuters*

Hard lessons for China from Japan's rise and fall

BEIJING—Something strange is going on in China: Economic scholars are looking to Japan for inspiration.

Putting aside the lessons China can learn from the country it overtook in 2010 to become the world's second-biggest economy has long been a dizzying cottage industry.

In Chinese circles, the main agenda item is that Beijing must do an overhaul half into the economy more than Washington had for Tokyo and needs to retain US pressure for a sharp rise in the yuan.

According to received wisdom, it was a spike in the yen at America's behest that prompted by Japanese asset prices in the late 1980s. When the bubble burst in 1990, it ushered in two decades of stagnation from which Japan has still not really recovered.

Some Chinese researchers, however, have been going further back in history.

They want to emulate the Income Doubling Plan launched in 1960 by Prime Minister Hayato Ikeda, which underpinned a decade of golden growth in Japan. The China Development Research Foundation in Beijing started a guidance from the University of Tokyo professor Cheremoto to give a lecture on the subject.

Invoking the plan is appealing because China today is at roughly the same stage of development as Japan was then. Ikeda stoked consumption by raising taxes, bolstering welfare, raising farm prices and reducing income inequality.

China needs to do the same.

The problem, according to economist Ting Lu with Bank of America Merrill Lynch, is that some advocates have distorted Ikeda's plan.

The misunderstanding, they say, was use of doubling Japan's national income—which was easily achieved—has mutated into a leftist goal of doubling Chinese labor income over the span of the ruling Communist Party's five-year plans for 2015-2018.

"This is very dangerous. Relying on the Chinese government to do would be to regulate too many prices, including wages," Lu said.

In the five-year plan that just ended, China wanted wages to lag just behind GDP growth. By contrast, as part of the current blueprint, to be unveiled in March, labor and household income would have to lose ends in faster than overall growth, Lu said.

But he said Beijing would make a real for so much it's mandated a 20 percent increase in the minimum wage every year.

What if there was another financial crisis and costs had to be cut?

"Just let the market do the job to decentralize people's wages," Lu said. "80-years workers wages have been growing 20 percent, not because of government regulation but because of supply and demand for labor."

Yilin Hu, chief economist at CITIC Securities in Hong Kong, said the five-year plan would embody the spirit of Ikeda's scheme.

"The Japanese plan wasn't a single idea to increase salaries or household income, but a comprehensive plan," she said.

Above all, Beijing would prioritize tax reform to put more money in people's pockets and spread national wealth more fairly.

"The most important thing is to increase income, because across this you can see the propensity to consume is quite low no matter whether you have a good national security network or not," Hu said.

Hugo R'Mayer of the International Monetary Fund's China desk issue a big difference between Japan then and China now—the latter's financial sector remains highly regulated.

Chinese central bank governor Zhou Xiaochuan has said that interest rates could become more market-driven in the coming five years.

But if China truly wants to learn from Japan, it will wind carefully.

Hiroshi Shiraishi, an economist with BNP Paribas in Tokyo, said deregulation of deposit rates in Japan from the mid 1980s meant banks faced higher funding costs while demand for loans slumped after firms were allowed to issue euro-yen bonds.

Think requires? Excessive risk-taking.

"Financial liberalization and deregulation were by no means solely to blame for Japan's asset bubble of the late 1980s, but clearly had a significant impact on bank behavior," Shiraishi said in a report. *Reuters*

7 insurance firms sue Toyota over acceleration crashes

LOS ANGELES—Seven insurance companies have sued Toyota Motor Corp. in an attempt to recover money paid to cover crashes they blame on sudden acceleration.

The insurers are suing that blamed 7.2% crashes on the problem and launch the Japanese automaker for failing to equip its cars with an override system that would ensure a car in idle if the brake and gas were depressed simultaneously.

They are seeking damages in excess of $150,000 from 14 crashes throughout the United States.

The lawsuits are data that blamed 7.2% crashes on the problem and launch the Japanese automaker for failing to equip its cars with an override system that would ensure a car in idle if the brake and gas were depressed simultaneously.

"Toyota believes that any allegation that a vehicle based defect is the cause of unintended acceleration is false or any other complaint is completely unfounded and has no basis," Toyota spokesperson Celeste Migliore told the Times.

The insurance companies are American Automobile Insurance Co., Fireman's Fund Insurance, National Surety Corp., Interstate Insurance, IGS Property Casualty Consumer, Motorists Mutual Insurance and American Hardware Mutual Insurance.

The lawsuits were filed Thursday in Los Angeles Superior Court. They follow the recent settlement Toyota paid $10 million to the family of four people killed in a runaway Lexus crash that led to recalls of millions of the automaker's vehicles. *AP*

US consumer bankruptcies said to hit 5-year high in 2010

NEW YORK—The number of US consumers who filed for bankruptcy protection in 2010 was the highest in five years, and the figure could rise as Americans struggle with excess debt in an uncertain economy, a report issued Monday said.

Roughly 1.53 million consumer bankruptcy petitions were filed in 2010, up 9 percent from 1.41 million in 2009, according to the American Bankruptcy Institute, citing data from the National Bankruptcy Research Center.

Filings in December totaled 118,346, up 4 percent from a year earlier and 5 percent from November's total.

The full-year total is the highest since the 2.04 million recorded in 2005, when there was a rush to seek bankruptcy protection ahead of a stricter federal law taking effect in October of that year.

Samuel Gerdano, executive director of the ABI, said filings are rising even as consumers try to cut spending and debt after the 2008 financial crisis and accompanying recession, and with the unemployment rate at 9.8 percent.

He said there is usually a 12- to 18-month lag between declines in consumer spending and bankruptcy levels.

According to the Federal Reserve, US consumer credit outstanding has fallen in 19 of the last 21 months for which data are available, declining to $2.451 trillion in October 2010 from $2.57 trillion in January 2009.

"Consumers have been on sort of a strike when it comes to taking on more debt, so they become more aware of the dangers of high debt burdens in a weak economy," Gerdano said.

Robert Lawless, a bankruptcy professor at the University of Illinois College of Law in Champaign, said the pace of filings may peak in early 2011 but that full-year filings could drop by a single-digit percentage.

"Consumer debt is declining, which means the incentive for taking the legal step of filing for bankruptcy is going down," he said. "I suspect bankruptcy demand has also gone down, but the bigger reason is that lenders are less willing to lend."

There were 1.94 million US consumer bankruptcy filings in 2009 and 2010, the most ever in a calendar year, passed since the 1.6 million recorded in 2001 and 2005.

"The (2005) law was supposed to reduce filings, but we are very close to levels we were at then," Gerdano said. "The laws of economic gravity are more powerful than the laws passed by Congress." *Reuters*

Goodbye to bad driving habits

WITH THE New Year comes resolutions to live a better life and I thought I'd come up with my own motoring related resolutions to make sure life on the road is a better experience.

One thing we Filipinos LOVE to do despite owning gas prices is idling excessively instead of just shutting off the engine. In Germany and in other European Unions countries, letting the engine idle while parked for excessively long periods of time. With rising fuel prices, I am amazed that even the most frail conscious people let their engines idle for prolonged periods of time devouring the lowest grade fuel, basically killing time. You can kill time without killing the engine. Invest in gym memberships or shorting off your engine.

Another poor Filipino driving habit is straddling two lanes. Ladies and gentlemen, the lines are the road representation of the space where our vehicles should stay. We should be between the two lines, and not have the line's passing underneath our cars.

Traversing is an old sand' rule. Latest by the MMDA and other traffic officers. It is defined as changing two to three lanes in a single maneuver that swerving in itself is supposedly MAP as offense or violation. However, swerving can still cause accidents and upsetting your self would not only swerving vehicle and potentially lose control or hit other moving objects on the road. Swerving can kill and will cause accidents.

We ever notice how everyone go ing slower than you is an idiot, and anyone going faster than you is a maniac? Well, how fast are you going anyway? Speeding, whether over or under speeding are both detrimental to consistently fast and safe moving traffic. Go too slow and you block other cars from travelling at the prescribed speed limit. Go too fast and you potentially can cause accidents. Slow this is due part I like, doing slow already is itself called slow down traffic, whereas going fast has a potential to cause accidents, which will cause traffic. The trick is not exaggerating that potential to escape speed limits and then some. Law enforcement officials who safeguard the speed limit normally have a plus 20kph tolerance for speeding to account for vehicle speedometer and wheel size calibrations variances and of course, overtaking for short periods of time on the NLEX, SLEX, Skyway and SCTEX. Whenever I travel on these roads, I try to keep my speedometer between 100-110kph at all times, and try to stick to my lane and ideally curb up behind a huge vehicle like a bus or truck to diminish aerodynamic drag, the savings are amazing, especially on a long drive. At that speed I am able to still overtake by and large, try with about, have enough time to evade slow moving vehicles and react quickly enough in an emergency situation as opposed to going your 100kph where life's a blur, in reality.

I've digressed quite far on my last point, but what I am trying to stress is that under speeding will not be safer, will not save on more fuel and will in itself already inconvenience people on the road. Speed up to the legal limit or least, help keep all vehicles on the road on a steady and quick as possible pace.

That's four resolutions this year. No excessive idling, no to lane straddling, no careening, and driving at the proper legal limit, not more is (well, maybe a wee bit) and definitely not under is. Can you do it?

Ricchi Santos

Don't go knocking while the Audi's rocking

FIRST: Another view of the audi's interior.

By Ricchi Santos

SO IBON Man's personal car happens to be an R8 and I ran underneath why. The Audi isn't your conventional supercar. It breaks the usual Ferrari/Lamborghini/Porsche mold because the Audis were originally well, station wagons (run the RS2, RS4 and RS6 Avant). The R8 remains an everyday supercar: very easy to get in and out, seating inside with an interior more closely resembling a luxury saloon than a kit car cobbled together in a shed in Italy. Yet it looks dramatic, and has the mighty fine V8 or V10 engine slung over its back making the most aggressively sensual music in the motoring world. It won't cramp your style, but rather add to it, which is fine for Tony Stark (aka Iron Man).

Sadly, only very few of us could afford a supercar, not unless justify purchasing one that seats only two and gets abysmal fuel mileage in the city. Hence, I propose an alternative: the Audi Q7 3.0 TDI. It seats seven people, so still sounds like a supercar.

The same engine is fitted in the entry-level A8 but tuned to deliver less horsepower and more torque particularly down low. Thankfully the overboosting, light-V8 sound of s5s is still there, and the numerous mail in the 300 needle approaches redline is also present. All told, the 309 needle approaches redline is also present. All told, the V8 TDI makes 350 horsepower, 70 less than in the R8, and 440 Newton-meters of torque down from in the R8M range's 560. With PSI technology. I was quite surprised that fuel consumption wasn't much better although when I wasn't going flat out, I was stuck in traffic on SLEX.

Time for 2009 an LED I-bond, lights and tail lights, new wheel designs and slightly revised front and rear bumpers but it's hard to notice these except when you switch on the aforementioned headlights and see the LED strip.

FOR 2011, the big news is the availability of a new 8-speed automatic transmission equipped with engine start-stop functions to traffic can help realize a fuel consumption.

Test drive

rounds, you're greeted with the latest Audi MMI multimedia interface that controls suspension, lighting, audio, audio and climate control settings.

Leather covers the entire interior, and the rather large dash flows upside steering wheel, with most buttons for cruise control, audio and paddle shifters behind so you can place your fingers on the wheel. The standard automatic Quattro AWD transmission. Of course, everything is electronically powered as you'd expect, and the steering adjusts for both reach and rake.

The Audi Q7 is, well, lovable. Despite her size, the car drives surprisingly sweep around you. It's probably the huge size, as well, which makes smaller cars make way for a steaming 16V 3.0-liter! by an even more urgent exhaust note from the big V8 in its midst. Yes, hearing the V8's song at full-bore is music to even the most disinterested of motorists who cringe their necks to better hear the beautiful V8 noise. I was so enthralled by it that I kept on going full-bore front 1st to 4th gears just to hear the engine. Unfortunately fuel consumption inflicted dramatically each time my accelerator down to about 2-2.2km/liter on the Audi's trip and fuel computer. Driving sedately though and fuel consumption moved up to a still dismal but acceptable 1.0 kkpl.

The sense of sportiness is pervading this front-rung and the car requires a surprisingly small space of about 6.3 meters to make a full U-turn, superb for this car's size.

The suspension is also amazing, lifted with huge 19-inch 255 tires, it makes all road imperfections submit to the mighty Q7's advanced air suspension set up. It rides outwardly thrilling with the ride height in sedate which allowed the cars heads me as the big Q7 keeps going up and down, like it was rocking. And you all know the saying, don't go knocking while the car's rocking!

Able with the damping rates, choosing between comfort, dynamic and automatic made me realize how far suspension technology has progressed. On the winding Tuang Iland road that connects Marcos Highway to Baguio, Cavite, the line is fast and flowing but the surface is crippled and uneven in some sections. Truly, a good test for any suspension. Even in dynamic mode, the Q7 banished the ripples on the surface and cornered confidently despite its huge size and decreasing understeer and blind corners.

In 2011, the Q7 will again receive cosmetic changes such as a redesigned headlights and tail lamps, new wheel designs and yes again, a new front and rear bumpers. But the big news is the availability of a new 8-speed automatic transmission equipped with engine start-stop function in traffic to help reduce fuel consumption. But the bad bet, namely the engine and suspension, will still be there, if not better, smoother, more powerful and fuel efficient to move the luxury SUV game forward. More technology in a package that won't cramp your style, but rather add to it.

Ways to keep your rage always in check while on the road

THE START of the New Year rush will definitely bring out traffic jams that will definitely test the patience of many a motorist. If you happen to have a short fuse—and even the most patient driver will experience losing temper at one point or another—here's a few tips on managing the safety tips below, in order to put that (road) rage in a cage.

Get your rest. Physical exhaustion contributes to mental fatigue and decreased vampers. Try not to drive when you are too tired. If you're unable to see improvement readily, just stop to relax, stretch your legs, and get a bite to eat. Even a short stop can make a big difference.

Keep your cool. Do not engage in emotionally charged conversations or arguments with your passengers. Your task is not a safe place to have heated arguments.

Leave your problems outside. If you just had a heated argument at work or at home, try to calm down before getting behind the wheel. Aggressive driving increases your chances of getting into accidents, inflaming other drivers, and being unnecessarily impatient. If you add that up, it puts you at high risk of becoming engaged in a road rage incident.

Respect the unexpected. By engaging in defensive driving techniques, you will lessen the stress that someone "surprises" or irritates you with her erratic driving. Also, accept the fact that there is a certain level of discourage of dangerous and irresponsible people out there, and they are unlikely to change despite your efforts or actions. If the court system cannot change these people, it's unlikely getting into a verbal or physical confrontation will either.

Keep your distance. If you notice an irresponsible driver, give him some extra space—you do not want to put yourself or your passengers in danger by driving too close or inattentive drivers. If you suspect that the driver may be intoxicated, note the make of the car and the license plate number and contact the police.

Mellow out. Listen to pleasurable music in your car or maybe some motivational tapes. Whatever puts you in a calm and relaxed mood is beneficial. Music is normally considered a vocalist audio—topics on talk radio are frequently controversial and designed to get listeners emotionally involved.

Give yourself a gentle reminder. Road rage can be deadly. It is not unheard of for angry drivers to get out of control that this incident ends tragically. One can witness a small pileup of your head starts to your dashboard, when you are feeling stressed out. Take deep breaths and try to look out at another driver, look at the pictures to remind yourself about what is or make.

Take a deep breath. When you feel yourself getting angry or upset, take a deep breath from your diaphragm and count to ten—or twenty if that's what it takes!

Keep your feelings in check. People prone to angry outbursts are three times more likely to suffer a heart attack than their calmer counterparts. Additionally, angry people have higher incidences of stroke, more frequent bouts of depression, and are more likely to become obese. Finding healthy ways to reduce stress is good for you on the road as well as in your everyday life.

Mind your manners. Every one makes mistakes, so be understanding when another driver makes a mistake your way. If someone cuts in front of you too closely, drives too close, or seems without a proper signal, try to keep in mind that at some point, most of us have made a mistake on the road.

And of all else fails . . . Should an angry motorist continue to tailgate you or when you believe you are being followed, drive towards the nearest police station or a well-lit crowded place with lots of potential witnesses and get help.

All told, anyone can get a little worked behind the wheel once in a while, but allowing your temper to get the better of you is both foolish and dangerous.

MOTORING

Edited by Joey R. Arcaina

Fearless forecast: What's new for 2011

2011 Porsche Cayman R

THE carbonmeanor friendly 2011 Lexus CT 200h hybrid compact hatchback

IN AUTOMOBILE industry parlance, totally revamping a motor vehicle is called full model change (FMC) while effecting a few features is called minor change (MC). By tossing some people in the industry over the brew fests weekend, I managed to come up with a fearless forecast of what new models will be introduced, what will be all-new (FMC) and somewhat new (MC) in 2011.

Let's begin with premium wheels. Sports car aficionados will be thrilled to know that this year, PSA Cars, the importer and distributor of Porsche and Audi, is bringing in the Porsche GT2 RS, 911 Carrera GTS, Carrera 4S, new Audi A8 long wheel base, A7 Sportback, Audi RS5, A5 Sportback and 1.4 Audi TFSi. Wow! With this awesome array, Robert Coyiuto, Jr. is certainly raising the bar of high performance cars in this country.

Mark Juzeg, president of Formula Cars Inc., the importer and distributor of Maserati, Jaguar and Land Rover, declared that the 2011 GranTurismo Maserati Cars Stradale, a 450 horsepower two-seater road car with racing genes, is coming here. Ditto the Range Rover Evoque and the diesel Jaguar XF, which actually entered the market at year-end 2010.

Lexus Manila, according to its president Jacny Ishii, will introduce the 2011 Lexus CT 200h hybrid compact hatchback next month and the 2011 (second generation) Lexus GX 460, a seven-passenger sport utility vehicle with a V8 engine producing 301 hp.

Jeric Ang, president of CBTL Motors Inc., the distributor of Mercedes-Benz, Chrysler, Dodge and Jeep, said noted that this year, the Mercedes CLC-Class 2-door sports coupe will be offered at P3.08 million, the Mercedes E-Class Cabriolet at P6.48 million and to top them all, the Mercedes SLS AMG roadster-super sports car (price still to be announced). The only SSIC American car will be the Jeep Grand Cherokee.

There was no reply from Asian Carmakers, the BMW importer, but a fly on the wall overheard that the BMW X3, which has undergone an FMC and had its Asian premiere in Singapore last November, is coming to town. Also, the 2012 BMW 3 Series, which also will have an FMC, will debut at the 2011 Frankfurt Auto Show in September.

Viking Cars Inc. marketing services/AVP Lei Concepcion De Guzman, responding to my vast inquiry, shares the news that they are looking at bringing in the 2011 FMC Volvo V60 sports wagon.

Willy Tee Tee, the president of MINI Cooper importer, Unilink Automobiles Inc., informed me that the 1.6-litre Countryman, MINI's first four-door AWD crossover, will be their new offering this year. The MINI is a premium little car with a premium price.

Not considered premium but just as pricey and fast are Subaru cars. The 2011 concept of the Subaru Impreza was displayed at the 2010 Los Angeles Auto Show. Nicky Marcano, GM of Motor Image Philippine Inc., importer of the Subaru brand, says that the FMC 2012 Impreza based on that concept will be offered in Manila before the year ends.

Among the more affordable brands, market leader Toyota Motor Philippines opted to crank-in suspense. Danny Isla, who is still with TMP because Lotus is Toyota's premium badge, insisted me that the Fortuner SUV and Hilux pickup will undergo a big MC this year. Pressed for more details, he teased back: "Basta it will have a new character line, promise!"

Tommy Inn Shinsholoki is also planning MCs for the Montero Sport, the Fortuner's arch rival and the Strada, the diesel's companion. Mitsubishi Motors Philippines marketing veep Emilano Dytianquin teased that this year, they will upgrade their best selling models, i.e. the Montero (1,000 units sold per month) and the Strada. The common rail diesel engines of all automatic transmission models will be upgraded with VGT (variable geometry turbo) and a new multimedia/audio display with navigation system. To complete the trend, Hyundai Asia Resources Inc., which ranks third in overall sales after Toyota and Mitsubishi, will field the FMC Elantra compact sedan and the diesel version of the recently launched FMC Sonata. Both the 1.8 litre Elantra and the 2.4-litre Sonata take Rambo design cues from the 2011 Sonata and Tucson. An MC i10 is also coming up this year, someone outside HARI told me.

Honda Cars Philippines Inc. vehicles sales and corporate communications head Yohann Gonzales gave the assurance that "for 2011, Honda's feature product offerings will have the same high quality and class-leading technologies." Although he gave no details, speculation is rife that HCPI will offer the FMC 2012 Honda City and MC Jazz this year.

Ford Group Philippines sales and marketing veep Steven Tan promised that company's policy prohibits advanced product launch news until authorized. But I gathered from market sources that the FMC 2012 Focus compact sedan and FMC Ranger pickup are entering, most possibly the FMC Everest SUV.

The FMC Chevrolet subcompact spark will arrive this year, Covenant Car Co. president Albert Ancilla hinted me. I heard elsewhere that the FMC Aveo is also coming.

Columbian Autocar Corp., which distributes the vehicles, will start selling the Sportage, Rio and Picanto, all of which underwent FMC, pre-senior marketing manager Polonio Soriano Jr. Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. SVP Vel de Leon, on the other hand, warned me that they will have no new models this year.

Meanwhile, as of deadline-time there was no 2012 FMC or MC car launch info from Universal Motors Corp., Isuzu Philippines Corp. and Suzuki Philippines Inc. Nonetheless, there are enough exciting new cars launched here to make the Year of the Metal Rabbit a golden one for car enthusiasts.

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BRIDGESTONE PASSION for EXCELLENCE

Castrol official oil of 2011 Ironman Challenge

CASTROL EDGE recently been named the official oil of the 2011 BMW Owners Society of Subicbay's (BOSS) Ironman Challenge VI to be held in Clark Freeport Zone, Pampanga this weekend. The leading motor oil brand will be pioneering more than 300 motorcycle riders and cars that have signed up for the endurance event.

The Ironman Challenge is a 1,200 kilometer and 24-hour ride and drive around Northern Luzon.

The event will flag-off at the Subicbay Scout Base at the stroke of midnight Friday that will end Saturday evening at the Orchard Hotel in Clark, Pampanga.

In what has become an annual tradition, the BOSS Ironman Challenge is on its sixth year and has been attended by motorcycle and car enthusiasts with the BMW Owners Society of Subicbay as its organizer since its inception.

The organizers hopes to beat last year's attendance that exceeded 200 making it the biggest event to date. In fact, with elite petroleum, motorcycle groups and car clubs singing up, this year's confirmed participants already totaled 300.

Riders were given the opportunity to test their skills while keeping in mind safe riding, navigating, obstacle racing and physical endurance. At the same time, participants will be able to meet their fellow sports enthusiasts from other clubs based elsewhere in the country while they enjoy the beautiful sights of Northern Luzon.

Elite participants

Castrol Power 1 and Castrol EDGE will be inside the engines of the motorcycles and cars of the elite participants.

Castrol EDGE is the market's leading synthetic oil specially developed to meet the needs of high-performance cars. It is specially formulated to deliver maximum horsepower up to 45 percent longer than other synthetic oils.

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For more information on the event, visit the official website www.ironmanchallenge.com.ph.

Elise Thelma Sioson Sarciaso

LIFESTYLE Home & Entertaining

Maggie's way with glass and geometry

By Margo C. Enriquez
Condo Watch

THE AESTHETICS of this residence in Forbes Park is typical of architectural designer Maggie Gic: clean lines, vivid colors, strong geometric shapes, asymmetry, and minimalism in the sense that the architectural details and spaces allow the objects to speak for themselves.

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Maggie's way with glass and geometry

From page C1

In the Romero Architecture & Design firm, architect Ernesto Romero Jr. handles the architectural aspect and the space design, while Go takes care of the aesthetics. "I sketch; he makes the floor plans. I style it," says Go, who teams around a site in six inch heels with thick platforms.

The 1,200-sq.m. house, owned by a lawyer, is one of her favorites because of the prodigious space. It had undergone several renovations.

Now L-shaped, the house has an entrance, a private spa and a pool house. The wide expanse of glass embraces the environment and maximizes the vistas. The fourth renovation aims to create more social spaces, and to make the occasional climb to certain Forbes Park rules.

Open to views

Romero explains: "With all the glass, we wanted the whole house to be viewed from anywhere. Members of the family will never feel alone when they are outside[?] moving around. The spaces are flexible. They double in size when you open the sliding doors, making them ideal for parties.

"The bridgeway unites about when we raised the ceiling in the living room and the lanai. We had to remove[?] this in the boys' room. It's Maggie's favorite feature. You can hang out and look out into the garden," explains Romero.

There are distinctive architectural features, such as the upturned eaves suggestive of a Japanese house, a floating cornice roof, and an extremely clear canopy.

The façade, designed by Go, is a play of rectangles, using marble and salvaged wood for textural contrast. The floating horizontal cornerline well provides privacy and screens the dining area from afternoon sun; a narrow fenestrated slit allows natural light in, and gives the diners a view of the perfect garden[?] lined with bamboo poles.

A cloister overhang leads into the grand steps and the nave door bordered by clear glass.

The other side is an access wall made from salvaged bahay ng.

Still on another side, a vertical cornerline wall with narrow vertical slits defines the living room.

Play of marble

Romero points out that Go has a keen eye, marked by a sharp sense of texture, a subtle but powerful control of color, and an elegant grasp of form and line. "She coordinates the colors, the finishes and textures, and decides where they go. We discuss the materials, such as using darker wood for the dining room and polished Italian Carrara marble. We worked with lots of Philippine mahogany and natural stone, except in the restrooms, where we used eggbonnie (Cebu limestone)," says Romero.

The house makes interior[?] use of such exotics as African rosewood, silverwood and walnut in the dining room. After a long absence, Bini-grained (ikeri) wood returns is restored in the den. There are exotic hardwoods, such as the native used in the floating door. "I like simple things," says Go as she runs her fingers over the door's detailed surfaces.

The restfloor retains vestiges of the client's taste—white marble flooring and stenciled French furniture. Braided black marquina marble on the the borders for restoration.

"People are afraid of marble. They think it's bodar. It's the way you put it together. It's still an elegant stone," says Romero.

On the living room, Go explains: "I like to stick to a monochrome palette. I get texture from other things. The living room is monochromatic. I put texture, like the size vases, glass lamps with curve shapes, and glass tables that seem to float. The shaggle carpet is darker than usual and it's very silky."

STRONG geometric shapes and bold color characterize the accent pieces in the living room.

An architect and architectural designer collaborate on a Forbes Park home infused with clean lines, strong shapes –and surprise touches of color

DRESSING room in an entertainment area with wide velvet bench and Italian chandelier. Transparent glass panels enable the owner to see her clothes.

WHITE leather dining chairs stand out against the floating African rosewood veneer accent wall.

ARCHITECT Ilona Romero and Go in a Phoenix chaise in the minimalist lanai. "It's an extension of the living room without having to deal with the elements," says Go.

Romero adds: "Maggie knows quality. She instinctively puts the right things together, style can't be bought."

The neutral-colored living room is enlivened by two fuchsia chairs. "They were non-negotiables. The fuchsia chairs anchor the room," says Go.

Elegant dressing room

In the formal dining room, a black B&B Italia chandelier is also an aesthetic choice, since this neo-color fits any style and color scheme. Go was attracted to its tendril-and spiraled silhouette, given a modern feel with steel and glass bends.

POOL SIDE view of the house with its upturned and extended eaves.

MAGIC SOLO in a DIARY dress, against the travertine and granite exterior

Go lined the powder room with textured wallpaper impressed with fine tie in patterns and metallic thin. The lavatory is a blank granite countertop that sits on the slanted white marble sink.

The luxurious feeling is reinforced in the owner's dressing room, with the long purple velvet velvet daybed and Italian crystal chandeliers as focal points. The closets are recessed in frosted glass, with some areas of translucent glass so that clothes come into view. The accent wall is covered in dark wallpaper embossed with floral designs.

The master bedroom is a work in progress. The owners, a single person, bought a round bed, since it didn't beg for a companion. She wanted a silver color scheme because it creates a heavenly feeling at the end of the day. Color is injected in the artwork. Go selected the accessories and arranged them in groups of threes on the ledge. Her interiors, a zebra-striped one is set off by two cut-white framed glass vases.

In the boys' room, Go took her cue from the built-in shelves and tables, characteristic of the new W hotels. While most architecture projects use realism or wenggy variants, the boys' room uses nautical as mood.

Maggie got the red graphicons shelf above the headboard," Romero notes. "For me, it's too bold. Maggie can be subtle, yet she can add up a room with a simple touch."

There lies Go's strength: combining romanticism and simplicity in one space.

Guess who broke their New Year's resolutions last year

It's that time of year again—to make promises we all hope to keep

IT'S A NEW year again, sweet! Time rushes by sooner by faster than you can bat an eyelash, and New Year's resolutions are being made again, but I can bet my last P100 bill that 9% percent of them will not be fulfilled, dahlings.

Let's start with three personalities who did not or all keep their resolutions last year. There's this high profile socialite who resolved to cut down on her shopping expenses.

"You know, last year I spent almost (my lips are sealed on this staggering amount). But I'm stopping all that," 20-something, "stopping" meant she only got two new cars, four Louis Vuitton handbags (she already had four super high-end bags), and two Bulgari and Cartier watches. Nevertheless! This does not include her dressing room full of name-brand clothes and gowns. Hey girl, so much for "spending less," 'di ba, palangga!

Another woman promised "I'll stop doing anything more to my face and body, and this time I'll keep my resolution." Two months later, I saw she had lips and body sculpting all over, and couldn't move her face from all the botox; her abdomen went up as high as her earlobe, she looked like a tomahawk indian! Really bizarre, dahlings. I guess she's just not comfortable in her own skin.

Then there's this business magnate who told me once in a party, "I've decided that I will stop battling to stay svelte. You know how much I really love her, but I have this girl, friend on the side whom I love in my own way. Well, I'm coming in all! This is my new year's resolution."

Okay dahlings, three months later he was back in the arms of the original girlfriend, and time went on the side. Should you believe?

There doesn't this husband, a bon vivant-cum-playboy, whose main mega-bank business is in Hong Kong, where he has to be all week. On weekends, he flies in Manila to be with his wife and family.

Soon comes the other part. On weekends when they're together, they somehow get on each other's nerves, getting into heated arguments. At the start of the week, before the husband jets back to Hong Kong, they're like the sweetest lovers around, while other times all hell breaks loose, each both inevitably making a resolution "never to fight again."

Darlings, that New Year's resolution has never been kept for the last six years!

Okay, enough of that! Let's start with my written and resolutions for 2011:

I watch. I don't listen to go through another year of the "South Beach Diet," which (you might call the "SOB" diet, because the first 14 days is when one needs the determination and the discipline to continue the entire three phase program. In other words, palangges, it's an ordeal of sanity, and at the same time a source of satisfaction over how you feel and look after its over. Nutrisyon!

My other wish is that I get to travel to more countries I haven't been to yet. Remember Discovery Channel's list of "1,000 places to see before you die"? I think I've only been to 220 of the places listed. I've got the pera, but I don't know if I have the "glory," dahlings, to do the whole list.

A resolution I hope to keep is not to overeat at my birthday anniversary, who, after all the times I've taught her how to spell names of people I've written about, still makes the same boo-boos with the names of some of my friends. Grrr!! I guess I'll just have to keep my patience and not go ballistic. To err is human, as the saying goes.

Now, I hope to keep this promise to eat more rice (the red and black kinds), bread, (whole wheat and multi grain), potatoes cooked any way and tons of veg, fatty, high-calorie, yummy ice creams. Ahhh, what a high!

I will also try hard not to be a consumer victim, which I am. I will close my eyes when I see an ad on TV and switch to another channel. And hopefully, I will try not to swallow over 50 vitamins this year!

JESSICA SOHO and LOI REYES, one of the judges

NORSA anchoring host Andrea Ilo and marketing manager Jonik Pena

SEVEN finalists—Andrei Gaurin, Glynis Lee, winner Paul Pineda, Albert Servilla, Dr. Cyrus Pasamba, Mia Buenaventura and Ray de Leon

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Haeren

powered by MAC COSMO

PEB Roman, who says she found his memory with his Nokia N8

TALENTED director and concept judge Paul Soriano

One mystery, eight stories

My last—but not the least—resolution is to always have my Nokia N8 with me all the time, palangges. You do remember when we were so intrigued by a good looking man who walked up along the Pier at Roxas Boulevard with no memory of what happened to him the past eight days?

At the hugely popular TV commercial for the N8 phone by one of the world's top brands, Nokia, we learned his name was Piet Roman, and he appealed to the public to help him recover his memory based on the clues left in his possession. Well, the public responded, and now Piet will finally discover his true identity and become a celebrity, dahlings.

From tons of participants who submitted their versions of the Piet story in the short filmmaking competition started by Nokia and Smart (cold, right Smarties were lucky enough to have their versions filmed—and in HD, no less, using the "best cinematic mini-phone of Nokia N8," natch!

At the Rockwell Power Plant Cinema, the night the Roxas short films were unveiled, and 1.2K-plus young scientific-journal editor Paul Pineda was the grand winner, as he won the hearts of online and tree voters, as well as judges Paul Soriano, Pepe Diokno and Lilit Reyes, palangges.

Paul P's "Phobia" bagged the P50,000 cash prize and the chance to film more innovating stories with his SoKo-Nil, the first Filipino series of misadventures based on the new Symbian software.

"We are overwhelmed by the response we received from participants who joined and sent in their stories," said cyber muse Ayesha Ilic, the super dedicated head of marketing for Nokia Philippines.

"Eight stories stood out and were successfully brought to the silver screen in HD, celebrating the creativity of Filipinos."

Moral of the story: Never leave your Nokia N8 behind. It may be the cell phone for whatever you want in for, palangges!

And what's your New Year's resolution, dahlings?

Higher taxi fares—and sleepy drivers

THE CONSUMER

Linda B. Bohlo

PEOPLE WHO take habitual to get around Metro Manila—and that includes me—did not get a happy start to 2011.

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has announced an increase in taxi fare; flag-down rate shoots will be P50 higher. The only good thing about the new rate is that there will be little excuse now for taxi drivers to ask passengers to give them tips—even when they don't deserve it—by claiming they do not have change.

But the LTFRB has retained silent about the policy of operators not having drivers work for 24 hours, at least, consecutive days or even go beyond 24 hours. So passengers will just have to get used to drivers who yawn all the way to their destination, and just pray they get to where they are going before the drivers fall asleep behind the wheel.

Incidentally, I had wondered why taxis now displayed "On Duty" and "Off Duty" signs. I thought, if they were on the road, they must be working. How, I realize that, because drivers set their own break time, the signs are meant to tell people the taxi will not take any passengers, even if it is serving. Ingly not craving unsteady drivers.

Feedback

Reader Gina Bellanillo is hoping that Isabel Rep. Arthur Yap has filed House Bill 3233 that seeks to set a limit on credit-card interest rates. But she would like to suggest to the congressmen to include provisions that would require credit-card companies to make sure their representatives, particularly those who call up clients, be trained, retrain guidelines on how to deal with the public.

She said credit-card companies should remind their representatives to be courteous when calling up clients, and not to harass them with numerous calls. She complained that representatives of a multinational bank were sometimes rude and threatened clients with legal action when payments were late. In by a local bank, she said they would meanders her calls from one person to another, some of whom never was even available or never to no positions to decide.

Alistair Carlomelli wrote to say she also believed American Express had become too big, such that computers were probably doing all the work for them.

She said she overpaid Amex on two areas in June, but for several months she was being billed "for an Overcredited Bal. since of $-9.02," and each statement reminded her of the "Payment due Date" of "21 days from Statement Date."

Virgie Chu said dore charging consumers was a widespread practice. Its mentioned a major mall chain where cashiers often failed to give consumers 20.50 centavos in change.

He said many consumers let this short-changing pass without a complaint.

Chu pointed out that even if only 300 students failed to give just 50 centavos in change every day, that would mean an additional income of P15,000 to one year for the large and very profitable chain.

He added that, while cashiers would tell customers they did not have the correct change, it's often instead on being given the right amount, they were often able to give it.

Chu said, "There should be a law to prevent this malpractice."

Send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 5/F Philippine Star Bldg., Monte de Piedad Ave. cor. Missouri and Roxas Sts., 1104 Metro Manila; fax 897-4790/896, or e-mail lbohlo@inquirer.com.ph.

Online housing market site holds promo

MYPROPERTY.PH, THE online market for real-estate buyers and sellers, is holding a promotion. Visitors sharing their idea of a dream home will have the chance to win a Samsung LED TV.

Visitors must register at www.myproperty.ph, and find a property listing at their choice from the Top Properties section. They should share the link of the chosen property by typing on their Facebook wall with the title/statement: "My idea of a dream home is (complete the sentence) and I found it on MyProperty.ph."

For promo mechanics, log on to http://www.myproperty.ph/dream. Then click on MyProperty.ph Post and Win Ball. Promo ends March 31.

MyProperty.ph has a wide listing of available properties in the market and an easy-to-navigate search engine. It affords visitors a convenient way to find the perfect home suited to specific needs.

PLDT TelPad: An Indispensable Lifestyle Tool

Just recently, the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) announced its plans to leave from the basic fixed and future of the fixed line business with a new offering that bundles a landline service with a touch-screen tablet and a high-speed myDSL service all under one subscription.

Unveiled to the public on December 13, the PLDT TelPad unit includes a special handset that also serves as a charging dock for an application-rich 7-inch screen tablet computer. Subscribers can use the handset as the primary landline computer to make and receive phone calls.

The tablet computer runs on the PLDT TelPad operating system that allows users to download applications at the subscriber's discretion. "The intuitive design allows subscribers to access information, entertainment and lifestyle apps easily with simple touch of the screen. Aside from dedicated telecast applications such as e-banking, news widgets and games, there are other apps being developed for a more enjoyable PLDT TelPad experience," said Dan Ilustre, Head of PLDT TelPad Business Group.

Patrick Ong, PLDT Vice President for Retail Voice, explained that the PLDT TelPad highlights the enhanced value of landlines in households and businesses. "The PLDT TelPad takes the built-in widgets and many applications that can access PLDT via content-rich portals and websites such as PLDT@Home, and PLDT and very soon, even PLDT Weatherpad, which is PLDT's online multi-media entertainment portal."

Subscribers who enjoy a multi-media lifestyle can also take advantage of the TelPad's built-in HDMI port which can be plugged into any flat screen TV allowing subscribers to watch movies, play games and very soon, even sing along with the karaoke app on the TV's larger screen, making the multimedia experience richer. The TelPad's stand can also be used to listen to music, read e-mail and display photo slideshows.

The PLDT TelPad tablet is powered by a 1GHz Cortex A8 processor that enables the device to deliver snappy performance. It runs on Android's latest operating system version 2.2, which offers access to thousands of applications from the Android Market. Users can download applications from the Android Market, Google's online store which offers over 120,000 applications like business apps, e-books and magazines and digital games like the highly popular Angry Birds.

Storage-wise, the tablet computer comes with 2GB internal capacity can be augmented by an 32 card and 32GB slot for additional storage. The TelPad also carries a 3 megapixel front camera for photos and video conferencing.

The PLDT TelPad service starts at Php1,199 with 1 megabit-per-second (Mbps) broadband connection and wireless service. The PLDT TelPad unit comes bundled with the plan. Existing PLDT myDSL customers only need to add as little as Php500 more to upgrade to the TelPad package. The other PLDT TelPad plans are Plan 2299 at 1.5 Mbps (P1,299 for myDSL subscribers), Plan 2999 at 2.0 Mbps, and Plan 4199 at 3.0 Mbps. All these are inclusive of the landline phone and myDSL broadband service.

'Mommy resolutions' for 2011

Sleep early, teach kids to say 'please,' make the most of playtime –and still leave some 'me' time for mommy to recharge

Audrey Tan

MomSpeak

Write us your story
lifestyle
@inquirer.com.ph

IT'S ALWAYS been my practice to come up with a list of resolutions for the new year, but this year, considering that my life really isn't all mine anymore, I thought it would be more fitting to come up with a Mommy List of Resolutions. Whether I make it all the way to December or not remains to be seen, but like all resolutions, they're worth a try!

1. Sleeping at the right time—I have to admit, my daughter sleeps a tad too late for a toddler. It seems so much easier to put a baby to sleep than an insistent two-year-old who distracts you from the time with all her singing and dancing. This year, though, the clock will be the boss. I recently found a book which suggested using a timer as a musical source of authority. It said to try telling the child in advance that when the alarm goes off, it will be the end of playtime, and the bedtime routine begins. You can even use a sand timer or hour glass, so that the child will have a more concrete understanding of how much time he or she has.

2. Eating healthy—This has actually been on my personal New Year's resolutions list for the last, oh, I don't know, 10 years, maybe? And now, it is spilling over to my parenting resolutions list! I am imagine this to be the same predicament for many mommies out there. We can do this—if not for ourselves, then for the sake of our kids. Let's save them from a life of hypertension and diabetes by putting them on the right track as early as possible.

3. Exercise—Nowadays, triathlons and marathons seem to be keywords—except for me. But this is certainly no excuse not to get the kids active. As mothers (it's sports, walks in the park, crazy-chicken dances, or hula hoops, this year will not see all of our butt!

4. Serving—I've been very privileged to be surrounded by people who value the importance of giving back to society's less fortunate members. Beginning with my mum, and on to my husband, and in the last few years, colleagues who have become wonderful friends in a foundation that caters to children—I'm constantly inspired. I believe it's never too early to expose our children to the realities of life, at age-appropriate levels, and to inculcate in them their responsibility to do good for others.

5. Playtime—Sometimes I take this precious opportunity for granted. Parents are children's favorite playmates. Playtime is the perfect time to create memories of joy and friendship that will last a lifetime. This year, I hope not to let a single opportunity for playtime with my kids pass me by.

6. Drinking pictures—It is just me, or with the advent of digital cameras, have printed photographs become passé? Well, guess what, I will finally fill up those frames and albums with photos we can actually touch, imagine, real physical copies! Wow.

7. Greetings and courtesy—My daughter is now two-and-a-half years old. She's fast approaching that age where egocentrism, whether a kiss or music, will be requested, and cravings of hurting just wishes up or losing why will no longer be accepted by may and John. With that are the magic words "Please" and "Thank You." While I'm proud to say that she's been very good with her "Please" (especially when chocolate is involved), the show of appreciation is lagging behind a bit. We'll see how we can improve things in the next 12 months!

8. Creative motivation—It is so convenient to spend the weekend in the mall with the kids. We can find everything there. You can choose from among restaurants, snacks, stores, yogurt shops, movie theaters, and, hey, you can even have Mass in the chapel! But this year, why don't we take a stand against the mall culture and find other ways to entertain the kids? Zoos, parks, cooking and baking at home, badminton, family karaoke sessions—the list could go on. If we take time and make a real effort to get creative as a family.

9. "Me" time—I don't know if we can consider this part of a Mommy resolutions list, but I find that giving moms (whom I'd like "me time" without feeling guilty is a great way for them to recharge and be refreshed. I feel a lot more patient and appreciate my kids more when I get back home after having stepped out, even for just an hour, to go to an exercise class or get a haircut.

10. Fulfilling other roles—While we're on the subject of taking time for mommy, I think it's also important to remember the other people in our lives—our husbands, parents, family and friends. It's vital for our kids to see us maintaining healthy and happy relationships with these people, as it gives them examples they can emulate later on, when they start developing relationships of their own. Growing up in this kind of environment will hopefully make them loving and secure individuals.

Of course, there are many other things that could use tweaking or improving in my mommy ways, but I'd like to maintain my sanity, too, while raising my kids. And so, let's fill those glasses—or your kids' milk bottles, if that's what you have in hand—and toast to 2011 and the wonderful memories and successes it brought us, as we celebrate 2011 and the exciting possibilities and adventures that lie ahead!

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 5, 2011 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER D1

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Ermie G. Velasco

APPETON NUTRITION

Easy-To-Digest
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Available at mercury drug and other leading drugstores/supermarkets nationwide.

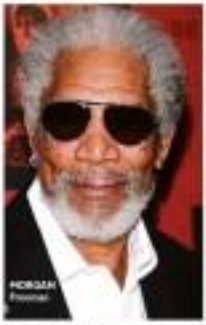
ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Robert V. Ascheles

Who moved us, made us laugh in 2010, part 2

(Conclusion)

LOS ANGELES—We continue looking back at 2010—who made us laugh or moved us in our interviews:



Strange encounter

Morgan Freeman recounted the strangest encounters he's had with a fan: "A woman stopped me on 9th Avenue and 42nd Street, hand her breasts and asked me to sign them. I walked away and said, 'I'm not signing your breasts.' She said, 'Uh, come on.' I went, 'No, ma'am. Thank you.'"

Mirror image

Shia LaBeouf on working for the first time with director Oliver Stone on "Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps": "We were shooting this scene in the Adirondacks [lake, my character says to Bretton Gish Bridau], 'I think you should look at yourself in the mirror first and see yourself, Bretton. It might scare you.' I remember reading that over the course of the four or five months that we were prepping for the movie and always feeling strange about it. I brought the script to Oliver and I said, 'You know, isn't that repetitive? What else are you going to say to the mirror? Of course, you're going to see yourself when you look in the mirror.' Oliver said to me, 'I like see me. I wrote Scarface, 'Go f**k yourself.'"

Power of solitude

Michael Douglas, who is battling stage 4 throat cancer, was upbeat in the interview. He declared: "We're still planning on doing 'Liberace' in the spring with Matt Damon and Steven Soderbergh. I always pitch myself to trying to put as much as possible into whatever I do. You get some wins come on a whole. We'll kick this. We'll beat this. This reaffirms your thoughts about giving everything you can in pursuing whatever your dream may be. I've always worked and played hard. I would hopefully continue."

Michael revealed that he welcomed solitude, especially in recent months. "You would rather be left alone. I myself, I believe in solitude. You have to heal yourself. You have to win. I'm finding that the quiet is what you really need. I've been really enjoying music. I've been reading books that I have not read. There's not a whole lot you can do. But when I see the office that people, strangers, have made for me, I'm very touched. Becoming part of that family has overwhelmed me. It helped me a lot."

Looking ahead, Michael said, "I'm sure I'm going to clean up my act a lot, coming up in the [e]ntury." With a grin, he added: "I'm still look[ing] forward to a good glass of wine, when I can have my sense of taste back."

Creative nudge

Josh Brolin demonstrated how director Oliver Stone indirectly tells the actor that he's not getting the performance that he wants. With his eyes squinting, Brolin furrowed in a perfect imitation of Oliver, both explained how the filmmaker challenges him: "He comes and goes, 'Hey! He always looks like he can't see anything and he's confused. He says, 'How are you feeling today?' I go, 'I'm feeling great!' He goes, 'Really, you sure you're not sick? 'I'm not sick. Why? Then he walks away. I realized that's his way of saying, 'It's time to mix it up. You're getting too smooth. You're not acting as deeply as you can.'"

Josh quipped that he'll do anything, even eat part of a painting, to please his exacting director. Josh cited a memorable moment: "There's a scene in 'Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps' where I get on a rage, take a painting and put it down[o]n the chair ... Nobody had any

PHOTOGRAPHS ON A1

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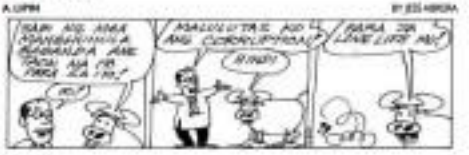

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HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS CRAIG

THE EARTH TODAY You're a workaholic and you're proud of it. You are realized and very determined to get what you want and to achieve what that is. Your organizational skills rule. You discover confidence. Nevertheless, your personality is not for everyone. Sometimes, be reminded again and again that Rome wasn't built in a day.

Birthdays of Charlie Sheen, TV host Diane Sawyer, actress Loni Anderson, author Ayn Rand.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Bubbly, positive and brave. Even others will fall in love! No matter of sensitivity, the yesterday's are extremely fortunate. Intuition your habits decrease at all.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Relations with partners and those friends are more pleasant now. Casual relationships could become committed ones. Friends are helpful.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Things are going extremely well in most areas. Bosses and VIPs are willing to help you. You might get a raise, praise or a better position. Hugs for the good.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) New ways require decisions to make. Wonder? Not only is life constantly day. It's a marvelous day to assess the who are depressed and anxious. Instead, reach out and help.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) This is an excellent day for real estate deals. It's also a lovely day to shop for beautiful things for your home or for family members. Be careful, though, to make sure you have the funds available before you commit to a purchase.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) This is a morning day for work, but avoid travel, red tape or capital things. For a lovely, pleasant time spend quality time with your girlfriend.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Romance and connections are favored. Be careful, though, not to make promises. A close friend, possibly your girlfriend, may be in need of your help. Be kind and generous.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) This is a fortunate day for you! Be sure to express your feelings to those you love. Be sure to make time for romantic activities. Someone may surprise you with a gift.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Dedicate a beautiful romantic day with your girlfriend. Others, however, probably are not feeling romantic today. Don't be upset by insulting people. Avoid difficult confrontations.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Most loved could become a close today. Unfavorable days will warm up in some way. The sun is due to go it alone. Join clubs, groups and attend conferences.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You might fall in love with someone who is also active, outgoing and very sophisticated. Romance. People love you because you are so sensitive.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Be careful not to overdo it. You may suddenly might fall in your lap. This is very lucky day in terms of higher education, publishing, other universities, publishing and the books. Legal judgments will be settled in your favor.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more programs or www.sudoku.com

Answers to yesterday's puzzle:

7	3	1	6	5	8	4	9	2
9	6	5	1	2	4	3	8	7
4	8	2	3	9	7	6	5	1
3	2	6	8	4	9	7	1	5
5	7	8	2	1	6	9	4	3
1	9	4	5	7	3	8	2	6
6	1	3	7	8	2	5	6	4
8	5	7	4	6	1	2	3	9
2	4	9	9	3	5	1	7	8

Concepts Sudoku By Edna Grace

	3	1				4	6	
9			1		2			8
			7					3
			2					7
		8					1	
			4					5
			6					1
8			3		4			9
	4	9				8	7	

Difficulty Level: ★★★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

MMFF box office update

AFTER last weeks, the box-office ranking in the 36th Metro Manila Film Festival remains unchanged. the action-comedy "Si Agimat at Si Enteng Kabisote" is in the No. 1 slot, with the comedy "Ang Tanging Ina Mo (Last Na 'Yan)" holding on second place. horror flicks are slugging it out for the third and fourth spots. "Balatkar" and "Shake, Rattle & Roll 12." After the Jan. 1 holiday weekend, total gross amounted to P432 million, an increase from last year's record of P367 million. But the budget of the MMFF executive committee had pressed the hope that the festival would reach the P1-billion-height when it wraps up on Jan. 7.

By Jo-Ann Maglipon-Al

DID YOU KNOW...

Who moved...

From page D1

idea what I was going to do. I myself didn't know what I was going to do. I think after the crying and dancing the finishing, I just put it the pointing to my mouth, which was probably so unhealthy. I threw him that kind of stuff. But we couldn't move. It was probably way too much. It's all about the willingness to go to see lengths to order to get the performance. He and Michael Douglas] have navigated united lines. Some people don't like [a lot predicted. I like to be predicted."

AARON Sorkin and Mark Wahlberg (left)

Versions of truth

It took the actors mind and talent of Aaron Sorkin and the masterful direction of David Fincher to craft a magnetic tale of the beginnings of Facebook, which is

woodsmanizing the way people communicate and interact. The movie, "The Social Network," posits the (secret behind Facebook's founder, Mark Zuckerberg.

Aaron Sorkin, one of the most brilliant writers working in Hollywood today, told us how he purposely presented different viewpoints on how the phenomenally popular social networking site began in Harvard. "It's several people's versions of a true story," he said. "There are a lot of versions of the truth, and I explored them for the purpose of storytelling. There's a Rashomon effect. The storytelling comes out of two dispositions that are happening concurrently with two separate lawsuits brought against Mark Zuckerberg [played by Jesse Eisenberg] and Facebook, so there was a lot of settlement-and-lawsuit-dispositions."

Surviving as love

Aron Ralston, whose tale of survival is told in Danny Boyle's gripping "127 Hours" (James Franco portrays the resourceful climber), said: "It's my life much of what with my belief that there are energies greater than our physical level of interaction. As my energy was dwindling and I was in Skippo—but in love. I believe in that script trend verse that says 'God is love. That's what this energy is ... it can give us amazing strength, courage and power. Disconnection from that [is] what leads us to suicide and depression. For me, love is love. Love and disconnection ... it's about connection and disconnection. If there's a secret to all of this, I was able to tap into that during the time."

JOSH Brolin

Pacman fan

After playing real life boxer Micky Ward in "The Fighter," Mark Wahlberg respects the ring athletes, including Filipino champ Manny Pacquiao, even more. He described Pacman as "the best fighter ever in the history of the sport ... And, he's proven that by winning his eighth title in eight weight classes. I really take my hat off to all boxers—what they have to do and the sacrifices they make day in and out, with no guarantee of success."

MATTHEW Lindquist

Capturing images

Filipino-American cinematographer Matthew Libatique—whose latest collaborations with director Darren Aronofsky, "Black Swan," is winning awards—on the film's lead actor: "Natalie Portman is total method because she's a ballet artist. It's my job to capture that through cinematography. If you look at the film, you'll see that it's her face that makes you believe she is a ballerina."

E-mail the columnist at mmpeller_5048@yahoo.com.

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